STORIES Of THE QUR'AN

By

Ibn Katheer



ابن كثير

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Translator's Note

All praise and thanks are due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds. We cannot find words to praise Him, as He only sees fit how laudation should be addressed to Him. We seek refuge in Allah from the evils within ourselves and the evils of our bad deeds. Whosoever Allah guides will never be led astray, and whosoever He leads astray will never find guidance. We bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the One without any associate, and We bear witness that Muhammad is His Messenger and bondman, peace and blessings be upon him, his kith and kin, his Companions and all those who follow their guidance until the Day of Judgment.

The Glorious Qur'an will continue to be the sole everlasting miracle till the Day of Judgement. It is the Word of Allah, Exalted be He, sent to His chosen Prophet, Muhammad (Peace be upon him) who endeavored with all his might and main to convey and explain it to the whole world. He visualizes to the whole world its inherent wisdom and admonition. The Glorious Qur'an, however, recounts a number of stories that took place throughout far-remote points of history which are full of events that one's eyes and mind cannot fail to grasp its admonition and advice. These admonitions and advice, if seriously considered, can verify and

restore to the right course a great number of false beliefs and concepts. Allah the Almighty says: ***{Thus We relate to you (O Muhammad (Peace be upon him)) some information of what happened before. And indeed We have given you from Us a Reminder (this Qur'an)}***. (Ta-Ha, 99)

Given the significance of these stories, not a small number of Muslim scholars exerted efforts to compile, verify and comment on them. Ibn Katheer (May Allah rest his soul) is a pioneer in that respect. His voluminous *Al-Bidayah wan-Nihayah* (The Beginning and the End) relates the stories of Allah's prophets and world nations since the beginning of history. Truly, he successfully managed to find the relationship between the details cited in the Glorious Qur'an and the Prophetic Hadiths of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) that explained and clarified the incidents that took place. He also tried his best to portrait the characters of heroes of our stories and their relevant backgrounds. So doing, he presented a lively easy account of these stories of the Glorious Qur'an.

Here, I must admit that translating this book *Stories of the Qur'an* was not an easy thing. As the original book of Ibn Katheer was full of details, the translation underwent some abridgment, without impairing the contents of the book. Also, I have left

out most of the Invented Hadiths, *Al-Mawdu`at*, that were 'falsely' attributed to Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) throughout the book (by other than Ibn Katheer of course!). However, it goes without saying that the style of the Arabic language is totally different from that of English. This forced me to make so many changes in the form of presenting the text with a view to rendering it more readable and easily understood by our dear reader.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all those who helped to publish this book. I pray to Allah to accept all our efforts as sincere deeds done solely for His Sake, for it is He alone Whose reward is of any real significance.

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Publisher's Note

All Praise is due to Allah and much peace and many blessings be upon the Messenger of Allah, his family, his companions, his followers and those who disseminate his call until the Day of Judgment.

Here we are with the book ***Stories of the Qur'an*** by Al-Hafiz Isma`il Ibn Katheer Ad-Dimashqi (May Allah rest his soul), taking a tour throughout the stories mentioned in the Glorious Qur'an pertaining to which Allah the Almighty says: ***{Indeed in their stories, there is a lesson for men of understanding}***. (Yusuf, 111) Yes, in order to find admonition, lessons and exemplary models!

This book of ours handles the stories that are cited in the Glorious Qur'an, gathered from the book titled, ***Al-Bidayah wan-Nihayah*** (The Beginning and the End). The book also covers a number of stories that were not included in ***Al-Bidayah wan-Nihayah,*** such as that of Harut and Marut. Also, stories of Allah's Prophets and Messengers (Peace be upon them all) are not included here as they are already detailed in Ibn Katheer's other book ***Stories of the Prophets***. One should know that **Dar Al-Manarah** issued three

successive releases of this valuable book during the years 2000-2001.

We would like to thank **`Ali As-Sayed Al-Halawani** for his efforts in translating and revising this work. Great appreciation is due also to **Sa`id Fares**, our respected reviser, under whose guidance and supervision the subject matter took proper form.

Finally, all Praise and Thanks are due to Allah, Most High.

Dar Al-Manarah Director

M. `Uthman

BIOGRAPHY OF IBN KATHEER

(700 – 774 A.H.)
(May Allah bless his soul)

`Imad Ad-Deen Isma`il Ibn `Umar Ibn Katheer Al-Basri Ad-Dimashqi was born in 700 A.H., or shortly afterwards. After the decease of his father, Ibn Katheer, aged seven then, headed for Damascus, accompanied by his elder brother. He owed much of his learning to Ibn Ashginah, Al-Amadi, Ibn `Asakir and others, may Allah be pleased with them all. He immensely revered Ibn Taimiyah, may Allah bless his soul, whose views he believed, defended and mostly abided by, particularly as regards divorce. It was on account of this that he went through an ordeal and was made to suffer a lot.

Ibn Katheer was widely acclaimed for the sublime degree of learning that he so admirably attained. Scholars have unanimously attested to his well-versedness, particularly in the fields of the exegesis of the Glorious Qur'an, Hadith and history. Ibn Habeeb describes him as "the leader of all men engaged in the exegesis (of the Qur'an). He amassed and categorized all (the knowledge) he heard. People marveled at his *fatwas* and benefited from his teachings. His *fatwas* grew widely popular all across the country. He was renowned for his precision and

was proclaimed as the beacon of history, Hadith and exegesis (of the Qur'an)." Ibn Hijji, one of his students, owed: "Of all our contemporaries, he (Ibn Katheer) was the best at memorizing authentic Hadiths and the most knowledgeable as to assessing the degree of reliability and honesty of Hadith-narrators as well as authentic and non-authentic Hadiths. His comrades and mentors acknowledge every word of the above. I would frequently visit him, and every time I was in his company I benefited from him."

Ibn Katheer lost his eyesight shortly before he died in 774 A.H. He was buried at the Sufis cemetery along with his mentor Ibn Taimiyah. Among his best-known works is his masterpiece in history *Al-Bidayah wan-Nihayah* (The Beginning and the End). He also interpreted part of Al Bukhari's *Sahih* (book of authentic *Hadiths*). By and large, Ibn Katheer's admirable knowledge and well-versedness are best manifested to whoever reads his two best celebrated masterpieces; his interpretation and his book of history.

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

(1)

The Story of Habil and Qabil "Abel and Cain" The First Crime on Earth

Allah the Almighty says:

وَاتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ ابْنَيْ آدَمَ بِالْحَقِّ إِذْ قَرَّبَا قُرْبَانًا فَتُقُبِّلَ مِنْ أَحَدِهِمَا وَلَمْ يُتَقَبَّلْ مِنْ الآخَرِ قَالَ لأَقْتُلَنَّكَ قَالَ إِنَّمَا يَتَقَبَّلُ اللَّهُ مِنْ الْمُتَّقِينَ(٢٧)لَئِنْ بَسَطتَ إِلَيَّ يَدَكَ لِتَقْتُلَنِي مَا أَنَا بِبَاسِطٍ يَدِي إِلَيْكَ لأَقْتُلَكَ إِنِّي أَخَافُ اللَّهَ رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ(٢٨)إِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ تَبُوءَ بِإِثْمِي وَإِثْمِكَ فَتَكُونَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ النَّارِ وَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الظَّالِمِينَ(٢٩)فَطَوَّعَتْ لَهُ نَفْسُهُ قَتْلَ أَخِيهِ فَقَتَلَهُ فَأَصْبَحَ مِنْ الْخَاسِرِينَ(٣٠) فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ غُرَابًا يَبْحَثُ فِي الأَرْضِ لِيُرِيَهُ كَيْفَ يُوَارِي سَوْأَةَ أَخِيهِ قَالَ يَاوَيْلَتَا أَعَجَزْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِثْلَ هَذَا الْغُرَابِ فَأُوَارِيَ سَوْأَةَ أَخِي فَأَصْبَحَ مِنْ النَّادِمِينَ(٣١) (المائدة ٢٧-٣١)

{And (O Muhammad (Peace be upon him)) recite to them (the Jews) the story of the two sons of Adam (Habil and Qabil) in truth; when each offered a sacrifice (to Allah), it was accepted from the one but not from the other. The latter said to the former: "I will surely kill you." The former

said: "Verily, Allah accepts only from those who are Al-Muttaqun (the pious)." "If you do stretch your hand against me to kill me, I shall never stretch my hand against you to kill you: for I fear Allah, the Lord of the `Alamin (mankind, jinn, and all that exists)." "Verily, I intend to let you draw my sin on yourself as well as yours, then you will be one of the dwellers of the Fire; and that is the recompense of the Zalimin (polytheists and wrong-doers)." So the Nafs (self) of the other (latter one) encouraged him and made fair-seeming to him the murder of his brother; he murdered him and became one of the losers. Then Allah sent a crow who scratched the ground to show him to hide the dead body of his brother. He (the murderer) said: "Woe to me! Am I not even able to be as this crow and to hide the dead body of my brother?" Then he became one of those who regretted}. (Al-Ma'idah, 27-31)

Narrated As-Sadiy on the authority of Abu Malik and Abu Salih after Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) and on the authority of Ibn Mas`ud and other Companions that Adam (Peace be upon him) used to get the male brought by one birth married to the female brought by the other. Hence, it was supposed that Abel would get married to Cain's sister who was better and more beautiful than anyone

else. At the same time, Cain wanted to keep her for himself. Adam (Peace be upon him) ordered him to allow Abel to marry her, but he totally refused. Then, Adam (Peace be upon him) ordered both (Abel and Cain) to offer a sacrifice to Allah Almighty. Meanwhile, Adam set forth towards Mecca to perform Pilgrimage. Just before leaving, Adam tried to entrust (the affairs of) his children to the heavens, the earth and finally to the mountains, but all declined to shoulder the (heavy) trust. Thereupon, Cain accepted the trust and after Adam went away they (Abel and Cain) offered their sacrifices to Allah. Abel offered a fat she-goat, while Cain offered a bundle of bad plants. Later, a fire came down from heaven and consumed the sacrifice offered by Abel and left untouched that of Cain. Cain became livid with rage and said to his brother: I will kill you so as not to marry my sister. Abel said: ***{Verily, Allah accepts only from those who are Al-Muttaqun (the pious)}***.

\`Abdullah Ibn \`Amr (May Allah be pleased with both of them) said: By Allah! The murdered (Abel) was stronger (than the murderer, Cain), but he refused to stretch his hand against his brother to kill him due to his piety and God-fearing.

Abu Ja\`far Al-Baqir mentioned that Adam (Peace be upon him) was present there when they

offered their sacrifices. After Abel's sacrifice was accepted, Cain said to his father, Adam: "It was accepted only from him because you invoked Allah for his sake." And, he secretly intended something against his brother. One day, Abel was late and Adam sent Cain to look for him. The two brothers met and Cain said: "Your sacrifice was accepted and mine was not." Abel said: "***{Verily, Allah accepts only from those who are Al-Muttaqun (the pious)}***." Cain got angry and hit his brother with an iron rod and Abel fell dead at once.

It was said: Cain killed Abel by throwing a rock at his head while he was asleep. It was also said: Cain choked Abel violently and bit him to death as beasts do. However, Abel's saying when Cain threatened to kill him: ***{If you do stretch your hand against me to kill me, I shall never stretch my hand against you to kill you: for I fear Allah, the Lord of the `Alamin (mankind, jinn, and all that exists)}*** (Al-Ma'idah, 28) indicated his good morals and ethics, his fear from Allah, and perfect piety that he may harm his brother, in contrast with the odious deed intended by his brother, Cain. For this, Abu Bakrah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) as saying: *"'When two Muslims confront each other and the one amongst them attacks his brother with a weapon, both of them get into Hell-Fire.' He (Ahnaf, one of*

the sub-narrators) said: 'I said, or it was said: Messenger of Allah! It may be the case of one who kills, but what about the slain (why he would be put in Hell-Fire)?' Thereupon, he (Peace be upon him) said: 'He also intended to kill his companion.'"

Allah the Almighty says: ***{Verily, I intend to let you draw my sin (on yourself) as well as yours, then you will be one of the denizens of the Fire; and that is the recompense of the Zalimun (polytheists and wrong-doers)}***. (Al-Ma'idah, 29) i.e. I do not intend to fight against you though I am myself far stronger and tougher than you are, but you will ***{draw my sin on yourself as well as yours}***, i.e. you will bear the sin of murdering me along with your previous sins.[1]

Narrated Imam Ahmed, Abu Dawud and At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Sa`d Ibn Abu Waqqas his statement upon the ordeal of `Uthman Ibn `Affan that reads: I testify that Allah's Messenger (Peace be

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[1] As for the Prophetic Hadith that was transmitted by some other narrators that reads: *"The killer will bear all sins of the slain"*, no one even knows its degree of validity: whether it be Authentic, Good, or even Weak. It cannot be found in any of the Prophetic Hadith Compilations.

upon him) said: *"There will be soon a period of turmoil in which the one who sits will be better than one who stands and the one who stands will be better than one who walks and the one who walks will be better than one who runs." Someone said: 'Allah's Messenger! What is your opinion if someone entered my home and stretched his hand to kill me?' Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) said: 'Be just like the son of Adam (Abel).'"* Narrated by Ibn Mardwiyah after Hudhaifah Ibn Al-Yaman in another wording as saying: *"Be just like the best of Adam's two sons."*

Imam Ahmed transmitted after Mu`awiyah and Waki` their saying: We were told by Al-A`mash on the authority of `Abdullah Ibn Murrah after Masruq after `Abdullah Ibn Mas`ud (May Allah be pleased with him) as saying: *The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said, "None (no human being) is killed or murdered (unjustly), but a part of responsibility for the crime is laid on the first son of Adam who invented the tradition of killing (murdering on earth)."* (Ahmed's Musnad)

However, there is a cave, called the "Blood Cave", in a mountain located to the northern part of Syria. It is thought to be the scene of the crime where Cain killed his brother Abel. The people living there came to know this through the People of

the Book (Christians and Jews) and only Allah Almighty knows the validity or realness of this. Al-Hafiz Ibn `Asakir mentioned in the biography of Ahmed Ibn Katheer that "He (Ahmed) saw in a dream Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him), Abu Bakr, `Umar and Abel. Ahmed came to know from Abel – who took an oath of that - it was his own blood (that was spilt there (in that very cave)). Abel said that he had asked Allah Almighty to make the invocations and supplications offered in that place acceptable. Allah accepted his own invocations and His Messenger, Muhammad (Peace be upon him) believed in that and said: I (Allah's Messenger), Abu Bakr and `Umar used to visit that place every Thursday." However, it is to be stated that this narration represents only a vision. Even if it were true, no religious ruling can ever be based on such a thing; and Allah knows best!

Allah Almighty says: ***{Then, Allah sent a crow who scratched the ground to show him how to hide the dead body of his brother. He (the murderer) said: "Woe to me! Am I not even able to be as this crow and to hide the dead body of my brother?" Then he became one of those who regretted}.*** (Al-Ma'idah, 31) Some interpreters said: "After Cain had killed his brother, he carried him on his back for a full year (not knowing what to do with his brother's corpse!)." Others said: He carried him on

his back for one hundred years till Allah Almighty sent two crows who fought against one another. One of them was killed. The murderer scratched the ground to hide the body of the dead crow. Seeing him doing that, Cain said: Woe to me! Am I not even able to do as this crow and to hide the dead body of my brother? Then, he buried the body of his dead brother and covered it with earth.

Historians said: Adam became very sick at heart and felt great sorrow for his dead son, Abel. Mujahid said: Cain was brought punishment very soon afterwards. On the same day he killed his brother, Abel, his foot was tied up to his thighbone and his face was forcibly directed up to the sun disk. His face used to go where the sun goes as a way of punishment and penalty in return for what he had done to his own brother. Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) said: *"There is no sin more recurring punishment (very rapidly) in the present life, along with what awaits for its doer in the Hereafter, than transgression and severing the ties of relationship."*

Imam Abu Ja`far mentioned in his *Tarikh* "History" on the authority of some people who had said: Eve gave birth to forty children through twenty births. Ibn Ishaq viewed the same and he mentioned their names in detail. However, nothing is sure of their names or numbers. Only Allah knows best and

no one else can know their exact number! Others said: there were one hundred and twenty births, in each one a male and a female were born. The first among them were Cain and his sister Qalimah, and the last ones were `Abdul Mughith and his sister Ummul Mughith. Then, humans increased in number and spread into the earth. Allah Almighty says: ***{O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person (Adam), and from him (Adam) He created his wife [Hawwa (Eve)], and from them both He created many men and women; and fear Allah through Whom you demand (your mutual rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship). Surely, Allah is Ever an All-Watcher over you}.*** (An-Nisa', 1)

Historians said: Adam did not die till he saw from among his progeny and offspring four hundred thousand persons (400.000). Only Allah knows best!

Allah, the Almighty says: ***{It is He Who has created you from a single person (Adam), and (then) He has created from him his wife [Hawwa' (Eve)], in order that he might enjoy the pleasure of living with her. When he had sexual relation with her, she became pregnant and she carried it about lightly. Then when it became heavy, they both invoked Allah, their Lord (saying): "If You give us***

a Salih (good in every aspect) child, we shall indeed be among the grateful." But when He gave them a Salih (good in every aspect) child, they ascribed partners to Him (Allah) in that which He has given to them. High be Allah, Exalted above all that they ascribe as partners to Him}. (Al-A`raf, 189, 190) Adam was mentioned first to draw the attention of the reader of the Qur'an, then whom was mentioned second was the whole race of mankind. This is done by way of mentioning the whole race of mankind after mentioning the forefather thereof; Allah the Almighty says: ***{And indeed We created man (Adam) out of an extract of clay (water and earth). Thereafter We made him (the offspring of Adam) as a Nutfah (mixed drops of the male and female sexual discharge and lodged it) in a safe lodging (womb of the woman)}.*** (Al-Mu'minun, 12, 13); and in: ***{And indeed We have adorned the nearest heaven with lamps, and We have made such lamps (as) missiles to drive away the Shayatin (devils)}.*** (Al-Mulk, 5) Where it is well-known that the "*lamps as missiles*" are not the same as lamps of adornment, but He turned from a single category or person to the whole race.

Adam (Peace be upon him) was the father of mankind. He was created by the Hand of Allah Who breathed out of His Soul into him, Who made the

Angels prostrate themselves before him, Who taught him names of everything, and Who made him dwell in His spacious Paradise. Narrated Ibn Hibban in his *Sahih* on the authority of Abu Dharr his saying: "*I said, O Allah's Messenger! How many were the Prophets of Allah?' He (Peace be upon him) said: 'One hundred twenty-four thousands.' I said: 'O Allah's Messenger! How many were the Messengers among them?' He (Peace be upon him) said: 'Three hundred and thirteen, a great number!' I said: 'O Allah's Messenger! Who was the first among them?' He (Peace be upon him) said: 'Adam.' I said: 'O Allah's Messenger! Was he a Prophet sent with a Message?' He (Peace be upon him) said: 'Yes, Allah the Almighty created him with His Hand, then, breathed into him out of His Soul, then, He fashioned him (in a very proper manner).'*"

In the Night Journey Hadith that can be found in the two *Sahihs* – Al-Bukhari and Muslim – Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) said: "*So the gate was opened and we went over the nearest heaven and there we saw a man sitting with some people on his right and some on his left. When he looked towards his right, he laughed and when he looked towards his left he wept. Then he said, 'Welcome! O pious Prophet and pious son!' I asked Gabriel: 'Who is he?' He replied: 'He is Adam and the people on his right and left are the souls of his offspring. Those on*

his right are the people of Paradise and those on his left are the people of Hell and when he looks towards his right he laughs and when he looks towards his left he weeps.'" (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Regarding the Prophetic Hadith that reads: *"Then, I passed by Yusuf (Joseph) and I found him to be granted half of beauty."* Some scholars explained that it means that he was given half of the beauty Adam was granted. Indeed, this is very suitable and convincing! That Allah, the Almighty created Adam, fashioned him by His Hand and breathed into him out of His Soul, for all these Allah the Almighty must have created the best of all things.

It was narrated on the authority of `Abdullah Ibn `Umar and `Abdullah Ibn `Amr that: *When Allah the Almighty created Paradise, the Angels said: "'Our Lord! Make this for us for You created for mankind the present world in which they eat and drink.' Allah the Almighty said: 'By My Glory and Loftiness! I will not equalize between the pious from among those whom I created with My Hand, and those whom When I said "Be", they were!'"* It was narrated in the two *Sahihs* – Bukhari and Muslim – that Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) as saying: *Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, created Adam in His own image with His length of sixty*

cubits, and as He created him He told him to greet that group, and that was a party of angels sitting there, and listen to the response that they give him, for it would form his greeting and that of his offspring. Adam then addressed then: Peace be upon you! They (the angels) said: May there be peace upon you and the Mercy of Allah, and they made an addition of "Mercy of Allah". So he who would get into Paradise would get in the form of Adam, his length being sixty cubits, then the people who followed him continued to diminish in size up to this day." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

(2)

Harut and Marut

Allah the Almighty says:

وَاتَّبَعُوا مَا تَتْلُو الشَّيَاطِينُ عَلَى مُلْكِ سُلَيْمَانَ وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَانُ وَلَكِنَّ
الشَّيَاطِينَ كَفَرُوا يُعَلِّمُونَ النَّاسَ السِّحْرَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ عَلَى الْمَلَكَيْنِ بِبَابِلَ
هَارُوتَ وَمَارُوتَ وَمَا يُعَلِّمَانِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ حَتَّى يَقُولا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ فَلا تَكْفُرْ
فَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مِنْهُمَا مَا يُفَرِّقُونَ بِهِ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَزَوْجِهِ وَمَا هُمْ بِضَارِّينَ بِهِ مِنْ
أَحَدٍ إِلا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلا يَنفَعُهُمْ وَلَقَدْ عَلِمُوا لَمَنِ
اشْتَرَاهُ مَا لَهُ فِي الآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلاقٍ وَلَبِئْسَ مَا شَرَوْا بِهِ أَنفُسَهُمْ لَوْ كَانُوا
يَعْلَمُونَ(١٠٢)وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ آمَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَمَثُوبَةٌ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لَوْ كَانُوا
يَعْلَمُونَ(١٠٣) (البقرة ١٠٢-١٠٣)

{They followed what the Shayatin (devils) gave out (falsely of the magic) in the lifetime of Sulaiman (Solomon). Sulaiman did not disbelieve, but the Shayatin (devils) disbelieved, teaching men magic and such things that came down at Babylon to the two angels, Harut and Marut but neither of these two (angels) taught anyone (such things) till they had said, "We are only for trial, so disbelieve

not (by learning this magic from us)." And from these (angels) people learn that by which they cause separation between man and his wife, but they could not thus harm anyone except by Allah's Leave. And they learn that which harms them and profits them not. And indeed they knew that the buyers of it (magic) would have no share in the Hereafter. And how bad indeed was that for which they sold their own selves, if they but knew. And if they had believed and guarded themselves from evil and kept their duty to Allah, far better would have been the reward from their Lord, if they but knew!}. (Al-Baqarah, 102, 103)

Narrated Al-`Ufi in his interpretation on the authority of Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) pertaining to Allah's Statement *{They followed what the Shayatin (devils) gave out (falsely of the magic) in the lifetime of Sulaiman (Solomon). Sulaiman did not disbelieve, but the Shayatin (devils) disbelieved, teaching men magic and such things that came down at Babylon to the two angels, Harut and Marut but neither of these two (angels) taught anyone (such things) till they had said, "We are only for trial, so disbelieve not (by learning this magic from us)." ...}* When Sulaiman lost his kingdom, great numbers from among mankind and the Jinn renegaded and followed their

lusts. But, when Allah restored to Sulaiman his kingdom and the renegade came to follow the Straight Path once again, Sulaiman seized their holy scriptures which he buried underneath his throne. Shortly after, Sulaiman (Peace be upon him) died. In no time, the men and the Jinn uncovered the buried scriptures and said: This was a book revealed by Allah to Sulaiman who hid it from us. They took it as their religion and Allah the Almighty revealed His Saying: ***{And when there came to them a Messenger from Allah confirming what was with them, a party of those who were given the Scripture threw away the Book of Allah behind their backs as if they did not know!}***. (Al-Baqarah, 101) and they followed what the devils gave out, i.e. musical instruments, play and all that blocks the remembrance of Allah.

Narrated Ibn Abu Hatim: I was told by Abu Sa`id Al-Ashaj after Abu Usamah after Al-A`mash after Al-Minhal after Sa`id Ibn Jubair after Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) as saying: Asif was Sulaiman's scribe. He knew the Greatest Name of Allah and used to write what he was ordered to by Sulaiman, then, bury it underneath the throne. After Sulaiman's death, the devils got it out and wrote between each two lines magical and blasphemous things. They said: "this is what Sulaiman used to apply and act upon." The ignorant

among the people regarded Sulaiman as a disbeliever and continued to insult him till Muhammad (Peace be upon him) was sent with the Glorious Qur'an that reads: ***{They followed what the Shayatin (devils) gave out (falsely of the magic) in the lifetime of Sulaiman (Solomon). Sulaiman did not disbelieve, but the Shayatin (devils) disbelieved}***.

Narrated Ibn Jarir: I was told by Abu As-Sa'ib Salamah Ibn Junadah As-Sawa'i after Abu Mu`awiyah after Al-A`mash after Al-Minhal after Sa`id Ibn Jubair on the authority of Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) as saying: When Sulaiman wanted to answer the call of nature or to make love with any of his wives, he used to give his ring to a woman called Al-Jaradah. When Allah the Almighty wanted to afflict Sulaiman, he gave his ring to that woman. Afterwards, Satan came to her in the form of Sulaiman and took the ring from her. When Satan put the ring on, all mankind, the Jinn and Devils submitted to him. Then, Sulaiman came seeking his ring from her and she said: "You are a liar, you are not Sulaiman." Thus, Sulaiman knew that it was a test from Allah the Almighty. Upon this, the devils were free to do whatever they wished. So, they wrote down books of black magic and blasphemy which they buried underneath the throne of Sulaiman. After Sulaiman's death, they uncovered these books and said to the people:

Verily, Sulaiman used to prevail with the help of these books. Consequently, the people declared their innocence of Sulaiman and declared him to be a disbeliever till the advent of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) who came with the Qur'anic Verse that reads: ***{Sulaiman did not disbelieve, but the Shayatin (devils) disbelieved}***. Then, Ibn Jarir said: I was told by Ibn Hamid after Jarir after Husain Ibn `Abdur Rahman after `Imran as saying: While we were with Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with them), a man came and Ibn `Abbas asked him: Where do you come from? The man said: from Iraq. Ibn `Abbas asked: which city? The man said: Kufa. Ibn `Abbas asked: What is the latest news there? The man said: I left them talking about `Ali's departing for them. Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) said: how dare you say so! If we felt that (he is departing us for the people of Kufa), we would not marry his women, or divide his properties among us. However, I will tell you the truth: the angels used to descend on the clouds and mention this or that matter decreed in the Heaven. The devils listen stealthily to such a matter, come down to inspire the soothsayers with it, and the latter would add to it one-hundred lies of their own. The people believes in them and regard them trustworthy. Allah the Almighty informed Sulaiman with the matter and enabled him to bury these lies under his throne. After his death, one of the devils said: I can

lead you to Sulaiman's dearest and most precious treasure. It is under his throne. Consequently, they uncovered it and said: this is magic. Afterwards, it continued to be copied and acted upon and what the Iraqi people practice nowadays is nothing but its remnants. Allah the Almighty revealed: ***{They followed what the Shayatin (devils) gave out (falsely of the magic) in the lifetime of Sulaiman (Solomon). Sulaiman did not disbelieve, but the Shayatin (devils) disbelieved, teaching men magic and such things that came down at Babylon to the two angels, Harut and Marut but neither of these two (angels) taught anyone (such things) till they had said, "We are only for trial, so disbelieve not (by learning this magic from us)." And from these (angels) people learn that by which they cause separation between man and his wife, but they could not thus harm anyone except by Allah's Leave. And they learn that which harms them and profits them not. And indeed they knew that the buyers of it (magic) would have no share in the Hereafter}***.

As-Sadiy said: Allah's Saying: ***{They followed what the Shayatin (devils) gave out (falsely of the magic) in the lifetime of Sulaiman (Solomon). Sulaiman did not disbelieve, but the Shayatin (devils) disbelieved},*** i.e. the devils used to listen

stealthily to the talks of the angels concerning what happens to those on earth: death, unseen matters or divine ordainments. Then, they come down to inspire the soothsayers with it and the latter would tell the people with it. The people believes in them and regard them trustworthy. Time after time, the soothsayers trusted the devils who later on used to add to each word one-hundred lies of their own. The people started to write down these matters and it circulated among the Children of Israel that the Jinn know the Unseen. Sulaiman moved quickly and gathered all these writings and put them in a chest and buried it under his throne. All the devils who tried to even approach the chest were burnt alive. Sulaiman declared that he would behead anyone who claims that the devils know the Unseen. After Sulaiman's death and that of the godly-scholars who knew it well, a devil came in the form of a human being to the people and said: I will lead you to an everlasting treasure that will never run out. He ordered them to dig under Sulaiman's throne and he took a side. He said to them: kill me if you find nothing. They dug it and found these writings. Thereupon, the devil said: Only with this magic, Sulaiman could overcome mankind, the Jinn and birds. Then, he flew away. It was rumored and circulated that Sulaiman had been a sorcerer. The Children of Israel kept these writings and disputed with Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him)

regarding them. But Allah the Almighty revealed to him His Saying: ***{They followed what the Shayatin (devils) gave out (falsely of the magic) in the lifetime of Sulaiman (Solomon). Sulaiman did not disbelieve, but the Shayatin (devils) disbelieved}.***

Narrated Ar-Rabi` Ibn Anas: the Jews used to ask Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) about matters from the Torah, and every time they ask him, Allah reveals to him that with which he defeats and overcomes them. Thereupon, they said: Muhammad knows what has been revealed to us better than we .do! Then, they asked him about sorcery and Allah revealed His Statement: ***{They followed what the Shayatin (devils) gave out (falsely of the magic) in the lifetime of Sulaiman (Solomon). Sulaiman did not disbelieve, but the Shayatin (devils) disbelieved, teaching men magic and such things that came down at Babylon to the two angels, Harut and Marut}.*** And He informed His Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) that the devils wrote a book about sorcery and soothsaying and buried it under Sulaiman's throne. Verily, Sulaiman was not knowledgeable about the Unseen. When he died, the devils got that magic out and deceived the people by saying: this is the knowledge which Sulaiman used to secretly keep from you. Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him)

informed the Jews of that narration and they went out lowering their heads defeated and humiliated.

Mujahid said pertaining to Allah's Statement: ***{They followed what the Shayatin (devils) gave out (falsely of the magic) in the lifetime of Sulaiman (Solomon). Sulaiman did not disbelieve, but the Shayatin (devils) disbelieved, teaching men magic and such things that came down at Babylon to the two angels, Harut and Marut},*** the devils used to listen stealthily to the discussions of the angels and add to what they heard two-hundred lies. Then, Sulaiman seized what they wrote and after his death they regained it and taught it to the people, it was nothing but black magic.

Sa`id Ibn Jubair said: Sulaiman used to look for and capture the magic of the devils and keep it buried under his throne. The devils could not reach it and thus they inspired to the people that it is the knowledge with which Sulaiman was able to overcome the Jinn, the wind, etc., and that it is buried under his own throne. Afterwards, the people got it out and practiced it. Later, the people of the Hejaz said: Sulaiman used to practice sorcery. Upon this, Allah the Almighty revealed His Saying: ***{They followed what the Shayatin (devils) gave out (falsely of the magic) in the lifetime of Sulaiman***

(Solomon). Sulaiman did not disbelieve, but the Shayatin (devils) disbelieved, teaching men magic and such things that came down at Babylon to the two angels, Harut and Marut}. Muhammad Ibn Ishaq Ibn Yasar said: when the devils knew of the death of Sulaiman, they wrote down types of sorcery (magic) as thus: to fulfill such and such matters, practice such and such (procedures). They gathered all these in a book and sealed it with a ring bearing the inscription found on Sulaiman's ring and titled it with: This is what was written by Asif Ibn Barkhiya by order of King Sulaiman Ibn Dawud. Then, they buried it under the throne (of Sulaiman). After some time, the Children of Israel got it out and said: Verily, Sulaiman ruled over us only with this and they diffused sorcery among the people. When Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) mentioned Sulaiman Ibn Dawud as one of the former Messengers sent by Allah the Almighty, the Jews in Madinah said: Amazingly Muhammad claims that Sulaiman Ibn Dawud was a Prophet, by Allah, he was nothing but a sorcerer. Thereupon, Allah the Almighty revealed His Saying: ***{They followed what the Shayatin (devils) gave out (falsely of the magic) in the lifetime of Sulaiman (Solomon). Sulaiman did not disbelieve, but the Shayatin (devils) disbelieved, teaching men magic and such things that came down at Babylon to the two angels, Harut***

and Marut but neither of these two (angels) taught anyone (such things) till they had said, "We are only for trial, so disbelieve not (by learning this magic from us)." And from these (angels) people learn that by which they cause separation between man and his wife, but they could not thus harm anyone except by Allah's Leave. And they learn that which harms them and profits them not. And indeed they knew that the buyers of it (magic) would have no share in the Hereafter. And how bad indeed was that for which they sold their own selves, if they but knew}.

Narrated Ibn Jarir: I was told by Al-Qasim after Hussein Ibn Al-Hajjaj after Abu Bakr after Shahr Ibn Hawshab[1] as saying: The devils used to write sorcery down when Sulaiman was absent. "They wrote: whosoever wants to do such and such, he should stand facing the sun and say such and such. And, whosoever wants to do such and such, he should stand giving his back to the sun and say such and such." They wrote this in a book titled: "This is what has been written by Asif Ibn Barkhiya by the order of King Sulaiman Ibn Dawud: from the treasures of knowledge." Then, they buried it under

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[1]Shahr Ibn Hawshab is a Weak (i.e. not trustworthy) Narrator.

Sulaiman's throne. When Sulaiman died, Satan established himself as an orator and said: "O people! Sulaiman was not a prophet, he was only a sorcerer! Go and seek his sorcery in his dwellings and luggage." And he led them to the buried "treasure". The people said: "By Allah! Sulaiman was a sorcerer who subjected us through his magic." The believers from among them said: "Nay, he was a faithful Prophet." When Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) was sent and he mentioned Dawud and Sulaiman, the Jews said: "Muhammad confounds the truth with falsehood: he puts Sulaiman with the Prophets while he was just a sorcerer who was carried by the wind. Thereupon, Allah the Almighty revealed: ***{They followed what the Shayatin (devils) gave out (falsely of the magic) in the lifetime of Sulaiman (Solomon). Sulaiman did not disbelieve, but the Shayatin (devils) disbelieved, teaching men magic and such things that came down at Babylon to the two angels, Harut and Marut but neither of these two (angels) taught anyone (such things) till they had said, "We are only for trial, so disbelieve not (by learning this magic from us)." And from these (angels) people learn that by which they cause separation between man and his wife, but they could not thus harm anyone except by Allah's Leave. And they learn that which harms them and profits them not. And indeed they knew that the***

buyers of it (magic) would have no share in the Hereafter. And how bad indeed was that for which they sold their own selves, if they but knew}.

Narrated Ibn Jarir: I was told by Muhammad Ibn `Abdel A`la As-San`ani that he was told by Al-Mu`tamir Ibn Sulaiman who said: I heard `Imran Ibn Jarir who narrated from Abu Majliz as saying: Sulaiman (Peace be upon him) took from every living creature a covenant. So when any person gets afflicted with anything, he (Sulaiman) asks Allah with that covenant and the person recovers. Unfortunately, the people added to this sorcery and magic and said: this is what Sulaiman Ibn Dawud used to act upon. Thereupon, Allah the Almighty revealed His Saying: ***{They followed what the Shayatin (devils) gave out (falsely of the magic) in the lifetime of Sulaiman (Solomon). Sulaiman did not disbelieve, but the Shayatin (devils) disbelieved, teaching men magic and such things that came down at Babylon to the two angels, Harut and Marut but neither of these two (angels) taught anyone (such things) till they had said, "We are only for trial, so disbelieve not (by learning this magic from us)." And from these (angels) people learn that by which they cause separation between man and his wife, but they could not thus harm anyone except by Allah's Leave. And they learn***

that which harms them and profits them not. And indeed they knew that the buyers of it (magic) would have no share in the Hereafter. And how bad indeed was that for which they sold their own selves, if they but knew}.

Narrated Ibn Abu Hatim: I was told by `Isam Ibn Rawwad after Adam after Al-Mas`udi after Ziyad the freed slave of Ibn Mus`ab after Al-Hasan pertaining to Allah's Statement: ***{They followed what the Shayatin (devils) gave out (falsely of the magic) in the lifetime of Sulaiman (Solomon)},*** as saying: one-third of poetry, one-third of sorcery (magic), and one-third of soothsaying. And, he said: I was told by Al-Hasan Ibn Ahmed after Ibrahim Ibn `Abdullah Ibn Bshshar Al-Wasiti after Surur Ibn Al-Mughirah after `Abbad Ibn Mansur after Al-Hasan pertaining to Allah's Statement: ***{They followed what the Shayatin (devils) gave out (falsely of the magic) in the lifetime of Sulaiman (Solomon)},*** as saying: they were the Jews who followed what they gave out in the lifetime of Sulaiman (Peace be upon him). Prior to that the people knew sorcery, but it was only followed in the lifetime of Sulaiman.

That was a summary of the sayings and narrations of the godly earlier scholars concerning this and it is obvious that there is no clear

contradiction between any of them, may Allah guide us all to the Right and Straight Path of His!

Allah's Statement: ***{They followed what the Shayatin (devils) gave out (falsely of the magic) in the lifetime of Sulaiman (Solomon)}***, i.e. the Jews - who were given an earlier Divine Scripture – gave their backs to it and rejected Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) and followed ***{what the Shayatin (devils) gave out (falsely of the magic)}, what the Shayatin (devils) gave out (falsely of the magic)***, i.e. what was narrated and related by the devils ***{in the lifetime of Sulaiman (Solomon)}.***

It is true that magic existed before the time of Sulaiman Ibn Dawud (Peace be upon them) because magicians were found in the lifetime of Musa (Moses) (Peace be upon him) and that Sulaiman came after Musa (Peace be upon them both). Allah the Almighty says: ***{Have you not thought about the group of the Children of Israel after (the time of) Musa (Moses)? When they said to a Prophet of theirs, "Appoint for us a king and we will fight in Allah's Way." He said, "Would you then refrain from fighting, if fighting was prescribed for you?" They said, "Why should we not fight in Allah's Way while we have been driven out of our homes and our children (families have been taken as captives)?" But when fighting was ordered for***

them, they turned away, all except a few of them. And Allah is All-Aware of the Zalimun (polytheists and wrong-doers)}. (Al-Baqarah, 246) then, Allah mentioned the story in which, *{and Dawud (David) killed Jalut (Goliath), and Allah gave him [Dawud (David)] the kingdom [after the death of Talut (Saul) and Samuel] and Al-Hikmah (Prophethood), and taught him of that which He willed}*. (Al-Baqarah, 251) and, the people of Salih who existed before Ibrahim (Peace be upon him) said to their Prophet Salih: *{You are only of those bewitched!}*. (Ash-Shu`ara', 153)

Allah the Almighty says: *{and such things that came down at Babylon to the two angels, Harut and Marut but neither of these two (angels) taught anyone (such things) till they had said, "We are only for trial, so disbelieve not (by learning this magic from us)." And from these (angels) people learn that by which they cause separation between man and his wife}*, i.e. the Jew falsely claimed that Allah Almighty revealed magic on the tongues of Gabriel and Michael to Sulaiman Ibn Dawud, but Allah belied them and showed their falsehood. Moreover, Allah informed His Messenger Muhammad (Peace be upon him) that neither Gabriel, nor Michael has descended with magic and He declared the innocence of Sulaiman (Peace be

upon him) from sorcery and black magic. Allah told the whole people that magic is nothing but the work of devils who teach it to the people in Babylon. And, that the two men who used to teach it to the people there were called Harut and Marut.

The Related Hadith (And Comments)

Narrated Imam Ahmed (May Allah rest his soul) in his *Musnad*: I was told by Yahya Ibn Bakir after Zuhair Ibn Muhammad after Musa Ibn Jubair after Nafi` after `Abdullah Ibn `Umar (May Allah be pleased with them) that he heard Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) as saying: "*When Adam (Peace be upon him) was put down on earth, the angels said: O Lord!* ***{Will You place therein those who will make mischief therein and shed blood, - while we glorify You with praises and thanks and sanctify You}.*** (Al-Baqarah, 30) *They continued: Our Lord! We obey You more than man does. Allah the Almighty said to them: Appoint two angels from amongst you to descend to earth. The angels said: Our Lord! (We chose) Harut and Marut. They went down to earth where the flower appeared to them in the form of the most beautiful woman on earth. They asked her to have sexual intercourse with them. But, she said: only after you disbelieve in Allah. They refused and she went away for a while. Then, she*

came back holding a child in her arms and they asked her for the second time. She said: first, you must kill this boy. They refused to and she went away for a while and then, came back holding a glass of wine. They asked her for the third time. She said: First, you must drink this glass of wine. They drank the wine, committed adultery with her and finally killed the boy. When they restored their conscience, the woman said: By Allah! After you had drunk the wine, you committed all that which you refused to do at first. Thereupon, they were given the choice between receiving the torment of this like or that of the Hereafter. They chose that of the present life." (Narrated by Imam Ahmed) The same was narrated by Abu Hatim Ibn Hibban in his Sahih after Al-Hasan after Sufyan after Abu Bakr Ibn Abu Shaibah after Yahya Ibn Bakir. However, this Hadith is an Unfamiliar[1] one from this Chain of Transmission. All its narrators are trustworthy but the one named Musa Ibn Jubair.

[1] The Unfamiliar Hadith: That is narrated only by one narrator even if he were in one class. Many scholars name the Unfamiliar Hadith as (the Single). (Translator)

Very Important:

Many scholars and transmitters narrated various stories and narrations pertaining to the story of Harut and Marut, but, all the details they mentioned can be traced down to the narrations made by the Children of Israel. However, there is not a single Hadith or Narration that can be traced down to Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him), the infallible one who says nothing but the truth. In addition, the text of the Glorious Qur'an does not relate this story in details, and thus we believe in what is mentioned in the Glorious Qur'an as it is without any increase or decrease. Finally, Allah knows best!

Allah Almighty says: ***{But neither of these two taught anyone (such things) till they had said, "We are only for trial, so disbelieve not (by learning this magic from us)"}***, Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) said: they used to warn anyone who came to them to learn magic and say to him: ***{We are only for trial, so disbelieve not (by learning this magic from us)}***, that they knew what is good, bad, belief and disbelief and thus they knew that magic is of disbelief. Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) continued: if they could not dissuade him, they told him to go to such and such

place. There he could find Satan who teaches him. The same time one is taught magic, his belief (symbolized as light) gets out of his body and he could see it flying away in the sky. Upon this, he would say: woe to me! In addition: Al-Hasan Al-Basri said: the two angels were sent with magic to teach the people as a test for them and Allah took their covenant that they do not teach anybody ***{till they had said, "We are only for trial, so disbelieve not (by learning this magic from us)"}***. (Narrated by Ibn Abu Hatim)

Narrated Qatadah: The Covenant was taken from them that they don't teach anyone till they say: ***{We are only for trial, so disbelieve not (by learning this magic from us)}***. Moreover, As-Sadiy said: they used to warn anyone who came to them to learn magic and say to him: ***{We are only for trial, so disbelieve not (by learning this magic from us)}***. But, if he insisted, they would say: Go to that pile of ashes and "squeeze the lemon thereon". If the man goes and does what he was ordered, he would see a light coming out of that ashes and flies till it reaches the sky – verily, this is belief. Instead, there would come a black object that would look like smokes and enters his ears and the whole of his body – verily, this is Allah's Wrath. After that, the man tells them of what happened and they consequently teaches him magic. This is the interpretation of Allah's Saying:

{But neither of these two (angels) taught anyone (such things) till they had said, "We are only for trial, so disbelieve not (by learning this magic from us)." And from these (angels) people learn that by which they cause separation between man and his wife, but they could not thus harm anyone except by Allah's Leave. And they learn that which harms them and profits them not. And indeed they knew that the buyers of it (magic) would have no share in the Hereafter. And how bad indeed was that for which they sold their own selves, if they but knew}.

In the interpretation of this Qur'anic Verse, Sunaid Ibn Hajjaj narrates after Ibn Juraij his saying: there is no one who practices magic but a disbeliever. As for the word "*trial*", it means a test and an ordeal. Some scholars found a textual proof in this Verse that whosoever practices magic, he becomes a disbeliever. This is supported by the Prophetic Hadith that has been narrated by Al-Hafiz Abu Bakr Al-Bazzar after Muhammad Ibn Al-Muthanna after Mu`awiyah after Al-A`mash after Ibrahim after Hammam on the authority of `Abdullah as saying: *"Whosoever attends himself to (or comes to) a soothsayer or a magician and believes in what he says: he will become a disbeliever in what has been sent to Muhammad (Peace be upon him)"*. (An Authentic Hadith)

Allah the Almighty says: ***{And from these (angels) people learn that by which they cause separation between man and his wife}***, i.e. the people learns from Harut and Marut the magic by which they cause separation between man and his wife though they (the man and his wife) have some kind of affinity and passion. This is caused by cunning of the devils as transmitted in Imam Muslim's Sahih from the Hadith narrated by Jabir Ibn `Abdullah that the Prophet (Peace be upon him) says: *"Iblis places his throne upon water; he then sends detachments (for creating dissension); the nearer to him in rank are those who are most notorious in creating dissension. One of them comes and says: I did so and so. And he says: You have done nothing. Then one amongst them comes and says: I did not spare so and so until I sowed the seed of discord between a husband and a wife. The Satan goes near him and says: 'You have done well."* Al-A`mash said: *"He then embraces him."* The dissension between a husband and his wife can be created through magic in that the devil let each one of them imagine something bad - a view, or manner, etc. – about the other.

Allah the Almighty says: ***{But they could not thus harm anyone except by Allah's Leave}***, Abu Sufyan Ath-Thawri said: they could not thus harm anyone except by Allah's Decree. In addition,

Muhammad Ibn Ishaq said: they could not thus harm anyone except in case Allah enables them to do so.

Al-Hasan Al-Basri (May Allah be pleased with him) said: ***{But they could not thus harm anyone except by Allah's Leave}***, i.e. whomsoever Allah wants to be affected, he will be affected. And, whomsoever Allah does not want to be affected, he will not be affected. In addition, they cannot harm anyone except by Allah's Leave and Decree.

Allah the Almighty says: ***{And they learn that which harms them and profits them not}***, i.e. they learn that which harms their religion and faith and profits them not. Allah says: ***{And indeed they knew that the buyers of it (magic) would have no share in the Hereafter}***, i.e. the Jews who took magic instead of following Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) knew that anyone who did as what they have done, he would have not share in the Hereafter. Allah Almighty says: ***{And how bad indeed was that for which they sold their own selves, if they but knew. And if they had believed and guarded themselves from evil and kept their duty to Allah, far better would have been the reward from their Lord, if they but knew!}***, that they took magic instead of following Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him), ***{And if they had believed and guarded***

themselves from evil and kept their duty to Allah, far better would have been the reward from their Lord}, i.e. if they had believed in Allah and His Messengers and did not violate His Boundaries, they would have received a far better reward from Allah Almighty. This is compatible with Allah's Saying that reads: ***{But those who had been given (religious) knowledge said: "Woe to you! The Reward of Allah (in the Hereafter) is better for those who believe and do righteous good deeds, and this none shall attain except those who are As-Sabirun (the patient in following the truth)"}***. (Al-Qasas, 80)

Some scholars found textual proof that a magician is a disbeliever in the Qur'anic Verse that reads: ***{And if they had believed and guarded themselves from evil and kept their duty to Allah}.*** Other scholars viewed that a magician is not a disbeliever, but his neck must be cut off. `Amr Ibn Dianr narrated from Bajabla Ibn `Abdah as saying: `Umar Ibn Al-Khattab ordered every magician and witch to be killed. Thereupon, they killed three witches. In addition, it is true that the Mother of the Faithful, Hafsah was bewitched by a maid. Consequently, Hafsah ordered that she had to be killed. Moreover, Imam Ahmed Ibn Hanbal said: it was transmitted from three of the Prophet's

Companions that a magician must be killed. Besides, At-Tirmidhi narrated from Isma`il Ibn Muslim after Al-Hasan after Jundub Al-Azdi as saying: *Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) says: "The Prescribed Penalty set for a magician is a blow with the sword."*

It was narrated that Al-Walid Ibn `Uqbah had a magician who used to make shows before him. He used to cut off a man's head, then calls it to get back to its proper place. The people said: Glory be to Allah! The magician revives the dead. However, a man from the pious migrants saw him and intended something. The next day he came and cut the magician's head and said: if he is truthful, he can revive himself! And, he recited Allah's Statement that reads: ***{Will you submit to magic while you see it}***. (Al-Anbiya', 4) Consequently, Al-Walid raged because the migrant did not ask for his permission first (to kill the magician), he imprisoned him for a while, then set him free. Allah knows best!

Imam Abu Bakr Al-Khallal said: One of the princes used to have a magician who makes shows of his magic and one day Jundub came and killed him saying: I believe he was a magician.

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

(3)

Dwellers of the Town

Allah the Almighty says:

وَاضْرِبْ لَهُمْ مَثَلاً أَصْحَابَ الْقَرْيَةِ إِذْ جَاءَهَا الْمُرْسَلُونَ(١٣)إِذْ أَرْسَلْنَا
إِلَيْهِمْ اثْنَيْنِ فَكَذَّبُوهُمَا فَعَزَّزْنَا بِثَالِثٍ فَقَالُوا إِنَّا إِلَيْكُمْ مُرْسَلُونَ(١٤)قَالُوا مَا
أَنْتُمْ إِلا بَشَرٌ مِثْلُنَا وَمَا أَنزَلَ الرَّحْمَانُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِنْ أَنْتُمْ إِلا
تَكْذِبُونَ(١٥) قَالُوا رَبُّنَا يَعْلَمُ إِنَّا إِلَيْكُمْ لَمُرْسَلُونَ(١٦)وَمَا عَلَيْنَا إِلا
الْبَلاغُ الْمُبِينُ(١٧) قَالُوا إِنَّا تَطَيَّرْنَا بِكُمْ لَئِنْ لَمْ تَنتَهُوا لَنَرْجُمَنَّكُمْ
وَلَيَمَسَّنَّكُمْ مِنَّا عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ(١٨) قَالُوا طَائِرُكُمْ مَعَكُمْ أَئِنْ ذُكِّرْتُمْ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ
قَوْمٌ مُسْرِفُونَ(١٩)وَجَاءَ مِنْ أَقْصَى الْمَدِينَةِ رَجُلٌ يَسْعَى قَالَ يَاقَوْمِ اتَّبِعُوا
الْمُرْسَلِينَ(٢٠)اتَّبِعُوا مَنْ لا يَسْأَلُكُمْ أَجْرًا وَهُمْ مُهْتَدُونَ(٢١)وَمَا لِي لا
أَعْبُدُ الَّذِي فَطَرَنِي وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ(٢٢)ءَأَتَّخِذُ مِنْ دُونِهِ آلِهَةً إِنْ يُرِدْنِي
الرَّحْمَانُ بِضُرٍّ لا تُغْنِ عَنِّي شَفَاعَتُهُمْ شَيْئًا وَلا يُنقِذُونِ(٢٣)إِنِّي إِذًا لَفِي
ضَلالٍ مُبِينٍ(٢٤)إِنِّي آمَنْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ فَاسْمَعُونِ(٢٥) قِيلَ ادْخُلْ الْجَنَّةَ
قَالَ يَالَيْتَ قَوْمِي يَعْلَمُونَ(٢٦) بِمَا غَفَرَ لِي رَبِّي وَجَعَلَنِي مِنْ
الْمُكْرَمِينَ(٢٧)وَمَا أَنزَلْنَا عَلَى قَوْمِهِ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ مِنْ جُندٍ مِنْ السَّمَاءِ وَمَا كُنَّا
مُنزِلِينَ(٢٨)إِنْ كَانَتْ إِلا صَيْحَةً وَاحِدَةً فَإِذَا هُمْ خَامِدُونَ(٢٩) (يس :
١٣-٢٩)

{And put forward to them a similitude: the (story of the) dwellers of the town, when there came Messengers to them. When We sent to them two Messengers, they belied them both; so We reinforced them with a third, and they said: "Verily we have been sent to you as Messengers." They (people of the town) said: "You are only human beings like ourselves and the Most Gracious (Allah) has revealed nothing. You are only telling lies." The Messengers said: "Our Lord knows that we have been sent as Messengers to you. "And our duty is only to convey plainly (the Message)." They (people) said: "For us, we see an evil omen from you: if you cease not, we will surely stone you, and a painful torment will touch you from us." They (Messengers) said: "Your evil omens be with you! (Do you call it "evil omen") because you are admonished? Nay, but you are a people Musrifun (transgressing all bounds by committing all kinds of great sins, and by disobeying Allah). And there came a man running from the farthest part of the town. He said: "O my people! Obey the Messengers". "Obey those who ask no wages of you (for themselves), and who are rightly guided. "And why should I not worship Him (Allah Alone) Who has created me and to Whom you shall be returned." "Shall I take besides Him alihah (gods)? If the Most Gracious (Allah) intends me any harm,

their intercession will be of no use for me whatsoever, nor can they save me?" "Then verily, I should be in plain error." "Verily! I have believed in your Lord, so listen to me!" It was said (to him when the disbelievers killed him): "Enter Paradise." He said: "Would that my people knew. "That my Lord (Allah) has forgiven me, and made me of the honored ones!" And We sent not against his people after him a host from the heaven, nor was it needful for Us to send (such a thing). It was but one Saihah (shout) and lo! They (all) were still (silent, dead, destroyed)}. (Ya-Sin, 13-29)

\`Abdullah Ibn \`Abbas, Ka\`b Al-Ahbar and Wahb Ibn Munabih and many others narrated a story of a town called Antioch (*Antakiyah*), governed by the king Antikhis Ibn Antikhis. This king used to observe idol worship. Allah Almighty sent him three Messengers whom he severely belied. The Messengers were: Sadiq, Masduq and Shalom.

It is evidently apparent that they were Messengers sent by Allah the Almighty. Qatadah claimed them to be messengers sent by Jesus Christ. The same view was held by Ibn Jarir after Wahb after Ibn Sulaiman after Shu\`aib Al-Jiba'i who added that: those messengers were called: Shimon, Jonah and Paul, and the town was called Antioch. This

view is groundless because the people of Antioch - when received three of the disciples of Jesus Christ (Peace be upon him) - were the first to believe in him at that very time. Thereupon, Antioch was one of the first four towns in which there first existed Christian Patriarchs. These four towns were Antioch, Jerusalem, Alexandria and Rome. However, the people of these towns were not destroyed, whereas the people of the aforementioned town in the Qur'anic verses were totally annihilated, following the killing of their companion whom Allah sent to admonish them. Allah the Almighty says: ***{It was but one Saihah (shout) and lo! They (all) were still (silent, dead and destroyed)}.*** (Ya-Sin, 29) There is no contradiction between the two interpretations, if the case was that the three Messengers of Allah were sent to the earlier dwellers of Antioch and that they were belied, the matter which incurred complete destruction. Then, their land was re-inhabited and during the lifetime of Jesus (Peace be upon him) the new dwellers believed in his three messengers.

The claim that the story mentioned in the Glorious Qur'an is that of the messengers of Jesus (Peace be upon him) is very absurd and groundless. Obviously, the context shows that they, the Messengers were sent by Allah the Almighty.

Allah the Almighty says: ***{And put forward to them a similitude}*** i.e. for your people O Muhammad (Peace be upon him). ***{The (story of the) dwellers of the town, when there came Messengers to them. When We sent to them two Messengers, they belied them both; so We reinforced them with a third}*** i.e. We supported them with a third Messenger, ***{and they said: Verily we have been sent to you as Messengers}***. The people of the town said that the Messengers were only human beings and they set aside the idea that Allah Almighty might send human beings as His Messengers to mankind. The Messengers asserted that Allah knows that they have been sent to them and that if they lie to Him, He would certainly give them the severest of all punishment. They added: ***{our duty is only to convey plainly (the Message)}*** i.e. what they were sent with and that guidance and misleading are in the Hand of Allah the Almighty Alone. ***{They (people) said: For us, we see an evil omen from you}*** i.e. from what you have brought us. ***{If you cease not, we will surely stone you}*** with bad words and stones as well; ***{and a painful torment will touch you from us}*** i.e. they threatened them with afflicting humiliation (bad words) and killing (stoning to death). ***{They (Messengers) said: Your evil omens be with you!}*** i.e. they will badly affect you. ***{(Do you call it "evil omen") because***

you are admonished?} i.e. because we reminded you with guidance and invited you to it you threatened us with killing and afflicting humiliation. ***{Nay, but you are a people Musrifun}*** i.e. you transgress all bounds by committing all kinds of sinful deeds, and by disobeying Allah.

Allah the Almighty says: ***{And there came a man running from the farthest part of the town}*** to support the Messengers and to declare his faith in them. ***{He said: O my people! Obey the Messengers. Obey those who ask no wages of you (for themselves), and who are rightly guided}*** i.e. they invite you to the absolute truth without asking wages or reward for themselves of you. Then he invited them to worship Allah Alone, and not to worship other than Him that can do nothing in this present life or in the Hereafter. ***{Then verily, I should be in plain error}*** i.e. if I abandoned the worship of Allah and worshipped anything else besides Him.

Then, the believing man said to the three Messengers: ***{Verily! I have believed in your Lord, so listen to me!}***, i.e. you should listen to my statement and bear witness to this before your Lord. Or, O my people! Listen to my declaration of faith of these Messengers. Thereupon, the people killed

him either by stoning him to death, or biting, or making one sudden assault against him. Narrated Ibn Ishaq after some of his counterparts on the authority of `Abdullah Ibn Mas`ud that the people stepped over his body till they broke his neck.

Narrated Ath-Thawri after `Asim Al-Ahwal after Abu Majlaz his saying: The name of that believing man was Habib Ibn Murriy who was said to be a carpenter, or rope-maker, or shoe-maker. It is also said that he used to observe his religious rituals in an isolated cave. `Abdullah Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) said: He was Habib, the carpenter who was afflicted with leprosy. He was charitable, but killed at the end at the hands of his own people. Then, Allah the Almighty says: ***{Enter Paradise}*** i.e. when he was killed by his people, Allah Almighty admitted him into Paradise. When he saw of the pleasures and joys therein, he said: ***{Would that my people knew? That my Lord (Allah) has forgiven me, and made me of the honored ones!}***, i.e. to believe in what I have believed in and thus gain what I have just obtained. Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) said: He advised his people during his life saying: ***{O my people! Obey the Messengers}***, and after his death ***{Would that my people knew? That my Lord (Allah) has forgiven me, and made me of the honored ones!}***. In addition, Qatadah said: The believer

always gives counseling because of what he sees of the rewards granted by Allah ***{Would that my people knew? That my Lord (Allah) has forgiven me, and made me of the honored ones!}***, i.e. he wished that his people would know the honor Allah bestowed on him. Qatadah added: By Allah! Allah did not admonish or even blame those people after killing him (the believing man) ***{It was but one Saihah (shout) and lo! They (all) were still (silent, dead, destroyed)}***. Allah the Almighty says: ***{And We sent not against his people after him a host from the heaven, nor was it needful for Us to send (such a thing)}***, i.e. it was not needful for Allah the Almighty to send against them a host from the heaven to avenge the Messengers.

Mujahid and Qatadah said: This means that Allah did not send them another Message. Ibn Jarir said: The first interpretation looks more proper because Allah the Almighty says after this: ***{nor was it needful for Us to send (such a thing)}***, i.e. Allah was not in need to send such a thing to punish them when they belied His Messengers and killed His godly man, ***{It was but one Saihah (shout) and lo! They (all) were still (silent, dead, destroyed)}***.

Interpreters said: Allah the Almighty sent Gabriel (Peace be upon him) who maintained a grasp

on their town's gate and made a single shout ***{one Saihah (shout) and lo! They (all) were still (silent, dead, destroyed)}***, i.e. they turned to be silent, motionless and dead.

Finally, all these indicate that the town mentioned in the Qur'anic verses was not Antioch because the people of Antioch believed in Allah and followed the messengers of Jesus (Peace be upon him). Moreover, Antioch was said to be the first town to declare faith in Jesus (Peace be upon him).

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

(4)
Story of the Heifer

Allah the Almighty says:

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَى لِقَوْمِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تَذْبَحُوا بَقَرَةً قَالُوا أَتَتَّخِذُنَا هُزُوًا قَالَ أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ(٦٧)قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَنَا مَا هِيَ قَالَ إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقَرَةٌ لا فَارِضٌ وَلا بِكْرٌ عَوَانٌ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ فَافْعَلُوا مَا تُؤْمَرُونَ(٦٨)قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَنَا مَا لَوْنُهَا قَالَ إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقَرَةٌ صَفْرَاءُ فَاقِعٌ لَوْنُهَا تَسُرُّ النَّاظِرِينَ(٦٩) قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَنَا مَا هِيَ إِنَّ الْبَقَرَ تَشَابَهَ عَلَيْنَا وَإِنَّا إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَمُهْتَدُونَ(٧٠)قَالَ إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقَرَةٌ لا ذَلُولٌ تُثِيرُ الأَرْضَ وَلا تَسْقِي الْحَرْثَ مُسَلَّمَةٌ لا شِيَةَ فِيهَا قَالُوا الآنَ جِئْتَ بِالْحَقِّ فَذَبَحُوهَا وَمَا كَادُوا يَفْعَلُونَ(٧١)وَإِذْ قَتَلْتُمْ نَفْسًا فَادَّارَأْتُمْ فِيهَا وَاللَّهُ مُخْرِجٌ مَا كُنتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ(٧٢)فَقُلْنَا اضْرِبُوهُ بِبَعْضِهَا كَذَلِكَ يُحْيِ اللَّهُ الْمَوْتَى وَيُرِيكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ(٧٣) (البقرة : ٦٧-٧٣)

{And (remember) when Musa (Moses) said to his people: "Verily, Allah commands you that you slaughter a cow." They said, "Do you make fun of us?" He said, "I take Allah's Refuge from being among Al-Jahilun (the ignorant or the foolish)."

They said, "Call upon your Lord for us that He may make plain to us what it is!" He said, "He says: 'Verily, it is a cow neither too old nor too young, but (it is) between the two conditions', so do what you are commanded." They said, "Call upon your Lord for us to make plain to us its color." He said, "He says: 'It is a yellow cow, bright in its color, pleasing the beholders.'" They said, "Call upon your Lord for us to make plain to us what it is. Verily, to us all cows are alike. And surely, if Allah wills, we will be guided." He [Musa (Moses)] said, "He says: 'It is a cow neither trained to tilt the soil nor water the fields, sound, having no other color except bright yellow.' "They said, "Now you have brought the truth." So they slaughtered it though they were near to not doing it. And (remember) when you killed a man and fell into dispute among yourselves as to the crime. But Allah brought forth that which you were hiding. So We said: "Strike him (the dead man) with a piece of it (the cow)." Thus Allah brings the dead to life and shows you His Aya: (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) so that you may understand}. (Al-Baqarah, 67-73)

`Abdullah Ibn `Abbas, `Ubaidah As-Salmani, Abu Al-`Aliyah, Mujahid, As-Sadiy and other earlier scholars said: An old man from among the

Children of Israel was very rich, and he had some nephews who wished he would die soon to inherit him. One day, one of them on purpose murdered him at night and threw him on the road – or at the door of one of his own brothers. In the morning, the people found the dead body and they disputed over him. His nephew – the murderer – came and began to weep and cry. Some people said: Why do you dispute over him? Why do not you go to Allah's Prophet (Peace be upon him)? His nephew came and complained to Musa (Moses (Peace be upon him)). Musa (Peace be upon him) said: by Allah! Anyone who knows anything about this murdered man, he should let us know. But, no one knew anything about it. Thereupon, they asked Musa (Peace be upon him) to ask his Lord concerning this issue. Musa (Peace be upon him) asked his Lord and he was commanded to order them to slaughter a cow, ***{Verily, Allah commands you that you slaughter a cow. They said, Do you make fun of us?}*** i.e. we ask you about the murdered and you say so! ***{He said, I take Allah's Refuge from being among Al-Jahilun (the ignorant or the foolish)}*** i.e. I take Allah's Refuge from saying other than that He revealed to me; and that was His Answer to what you had wanted me to ask Him.

Ibn `Abbas, `Ubaidah, Mujahid, `Ikrimah, As-Sadiy, Abu Al-`Aliyah and others said: If they were

to slaughter any cow, they would fulfill the purpose thereof. But, they made it difficult for themselves (by asking so many questions thereof), and thus Allah the Almighty made it difficult for them (by stipulating so many conditions for the desired cow). They asked about its description, color and age; and they were answered with what was scarce and dear (in a way to make it hard for them to find it). The point is that they were commanded to slaughter neither a too old cow, nor a too young, but (it is) between the two conditions. This view was held by Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Abu Al-`Aliyah, `Ikrimah, Al-Hasan, Qatadah and others. Then, they pressed themselves with their questions through asking about its color. And they were answered to make it ***{yellow cow, bright in its color, pleasing the beholders},*** which is very rare and dear.

Then, they asked: ***{They said, "Call upon your Lord for us to make plain to us what it is. Verily, to us all cows are alike. And surely, if Allah wills, we will be guided." He [Musa (Moses)] said, "He says: 'It is a cow neither trained to tilt the soil nor water the fields, sound, having no other color except bright yellow.' "They said, "Now you have brought the truth." So they slaughtered it though they were near to not doing it}***. It is said that they could not find a cow with all these descriptions but with a man

who was righteous and good to his father. They asked him to submit it to them, but he refused. They tried to seduce him as to its price till they offered him what equals its wieght in gold. But, he refused. Then, they offered him an amount of gold that equals its weight ten-times. Finally, he accepted their offer and submitted it to them. Then, Musa (Peace be upon him) commanded them to slaughter it ***{So they slaughtered it though they were near to not doing it}*** i.e. while they were hesitant.

Then, Musa (Peace be upon him) instructed them with the Command of Allah to strike the dead man with a piece of the cow. Some scholars said: with part of its thighbone, or with part of the flesh between its shoulders. When they stroke him with part thereof, he was resurrected by Allah the Almighty. Musa (Peace be upon him) asked him: who's your murderer? He said: it was my nephew who killed me. Then, he died again. Allah the Almighty says ***{Thus Allah brings the dead to life and shows you His Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) so that you may understand}*** i.e. as you witnessed the revival of that dead man by the Command of Allah the Almighty, He can do the same to all the dead people when He wishes to. He, Almighty Allah, says ***{The creation of you all and the resurrection of you all are only***

as (the creation and resurrection of) a single person. Verily, Allah is All-Hearer, All-Seer}. (Luqman, 28)

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

(5)

Moses and Al-Khadir

Allah, the Almighty says:

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَى لِفَتَاهُ لا أَبْرَحُ حَتَّى أَبْلُغَ مَجْمَعَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ أَوْ أَمْضِيَ حُقُبًا (٦٠)فَلَمَّا بَلَغَا مَجْمَعَ بَيْنِهِمَا نَسِيَا حُوتَهُمَا فَاتَّخَذَ سَبِيلَهُ فِي الْبَحْرِ سَرَبًا (٦١)فَلَمَّا جَاوَزَا قَالَ لِفَتَاهُ آتِنَا غَدَاءَنَا لَقَدْ لَقِينَا مِنْ سَفَرِنَا هَذَا نَصَبًا(٦٢)قَالَ أَرَأَيْتَ إِذْ أَوَيْنَا إِلَى الصَّخْرَةِ فَإِنِّي نَسِيتُ الْحُوتَ وَمَا أَنْسَانِيهُ إِلا الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ أَذْكُرَهُ وَاتَّخَذَ سَبِيلَهُ فِي الْبَحْرِ عَجَبًا(٦٣)قَالَ ذَلِكَ مَا كُنَّا نَبْغِ فَارْتَدَّا عَلَى آثَارِهِمَا قَصَصًا(٦٤) فَوَجَدَا عَبْدًا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا آتَيْنَاهُ رَحْمَةً مِنْ عِنْدِنَا وَعَلَّمْنَاهُ مِنْ لَدُنَّا عِلْمًا(٦٥)قَالَ لَهُ مُوسَى هَلْ أَتَّبِعُكَ عَلَى أَنْ تُعَلِّمَنِي مِمَّا عُلِّمْتَ رُشْدًا(٦٦)قَالَ إِنَّكَ لَنْ تَسْتَطِيعَ مَعِي صَبْرًا(٦٧) وَكَيْفَ تَصْبِرُ عَلَى مَا لَمْ تُحِطْ بِهِ خُبْرًا(٦٨)قَالَ سَتَجِدُنِي إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ صَابِرًا وَلا أَعْصِي لَكَ أَمْرًا(٦٩)قَالَ فَإِنْ اتَّبَعْتَنِي فَلا تَسْأَلْنِي عَنْ شَيْءٍ حَتَّى أُحْدِثَ لَكَ مِنْهُ ذِكْرًا(٧٠) فَانطَلَقَا حَتَّى إِذَا رَكِبَا فِي السَّفِينَةِ خَرَقَهَا قَالَ أَخَرَقْتَهَا لِتُغْرِقَ أَهْلَهَا لَقَدْ جِئْتَ شَيْئًا إِمْرًا(٧١)قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ إِنَّكَ لَنْ تَسْتَطِيعَ مَعِي صَبْرًا(٧٢)قَالَ لا تُؤَاخِذْنِي بِمَا نَسِيتُ وَلا تُرْهِقْنِي

مِنْ أَمْرِي عُسْرًا(٧٣)فَانطَلَقَا حَتَّى إِذَا لَقِيَا غُلامًا فَقَتَلَهُ قَالَ أَقَتَلْتَ نَفْسًا زَكِيَّةً بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ لَقَدْ جِئْتَ شَيْئًا نُكْرًا(٧٤)قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكَ إِنَّكَ لَنْ تَسْتَطِيعَ مَعِي صَبْرًا(٧٥) قَالَ إِنْ سَأَلْتُكَ عَنْ شَيْءٍ بَعْدَهَا فَلا تُصَاحِبْنِي قَدْ بَلَغْتَ مِنْ لَدُنِّي عُذْرًا(٧٦)فَانطَلَقَا حَتَّى إِذَا أَتَيَا أَهْلَ قَرْيَةٍ اسْتَطْعَمَا أَهْلَهَا فَأَبَوْا أَنْ يُضَيِّفُوهُمَا فَوَجَدَا فِيهَا جِدَارًا يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَنقَضَّ فَأَقَامَهُ قَالَ لَوْ شِئْتَ لاتَّخَذْتَ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا(٧٧)قَالَ هَذَا فِرَاقُ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنِكَ سَأُنَبِّئُكَ بِتَأْوِيلِ مَا لَمْ تَسْتَطِعْ عَلَيْهِ صَبْرًا(٧٨) أَمَّا السَّفِينَةُ فَكَانَتْ لِمَسَاكِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ فِي الْبَحْرِ فَأَرَدْتُ أَنْ أَعِيبَهَا وَكَانَ وَرَاءَهُمْ مَلِكٌ يَأْخُذُ كُلَّ سَفِينَةٍ غَصْبًا(٧٩)وَأَمَّا الْغُلامُ فَكَانَ أَبَوَاهُ مُؤْمِنَيْنِ فَخَشِينَا أَنْ يُرْهِقَهُمَا طُغْيَانًا وَكُفْرًا(٨٠)فَأَرَدْنَا أَنْ يُبْدِلَهُمَا رَبُّهُمَا خَيْرًا مِنْهُ زَكَاةً وَأَقْرَبَ رُحْمًا(٨١) وَأَمَّا الْجِدَارُ فَكَانَ لِغُلامَيْنِ يَتِيمَيْنِ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ وَكَانَ تَحْتَهُ كَنزٌ لَهُمَا وَكَانَ أَبُوهُمَا صَالِحًا فَأَرَادَ رَبُّكَ أَنْ يَبْلُغَا أَشُدَّهُمَا وَيَسْتَخْرِجَا كَنزَهُمَا رَحْمَةً مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَمَا فَعَلْتُهُ عَنْ أَمْرِي ذَلِكَ تَأْوِيلُ مَا لَمْ تَسْطِعْ عَلَيْهِ صَبْرًا(٨٢) (الكهف: ٦٠-٨٢)

{And (remember) when Musa (Moses) said to his boy-servant: "I will not give up (travelling) until I reach the junction of the two seas or (until) I spend years and years in travelling." But when they reached the junction of the two seas, they forgot their fish, and it took its way through the sea as in a tunnel. So when they had passed further on (beyond that fixed place), Musa (Moses) said to his boy-servant: "Bring us our morning meal; truly, we

have suffered much fatigue in this, our journey." He said: "Do you remember when we betook ourselves to the rock? I indeed forgot the fish; none but Shaitan (Satan) made me forget to remember it, it took its course into the sea in a strange (way)!" [Musa (Moses)] said: "That is what we have been seeking." So they went back retracing their footsteps. Then they found one of Our slaves, on whom We had bestowed mercy from Us, and whom We had taught knowledge from Us. Musa (Moses) said to him (Al-Khadir): "May I follow you so that you teach me something of that knowledge (guidance and true path) which you have been taught (by Allah)?" He (Al-Khadir) said: "Verily you will not be able to have patience with me! And how can you have patience about a thing which you know not." Musa (Moses) said: "If Allah wills, you will find me patient, and I will not disobey you in aught." He (Al-Khadir) said: "Then, if you follow me, ask me not about anything till I myself mention of it to you." So they both proceeded, till, when they embarked the ship, he (Al-Khadir) scuttled it. Musa (Moses) said: "Have you scuttled it in order to drown its people? Verily, you have committed a thing Imr (a Munkar - evil, bad, dreadful thing)." He (Al-Khadir) said: "Did I not tell you, that you would not be able to have patience with me?" [Musa (Moses)] said: "Call me not to account for

what I forgot,[1] and be not hard upon me for my affair (with you)." Then they both proceeded, till they met a boy, and he (Al-Khadir) killed him. Musa (Moses) said: "Have you killed an innocent person who had killed none? Verily, you have committed a thing Nukr (a great Munkar prohibited, evil, dreadful thing)!" (Al-Khadir) said: "Did I not tell you that you can have no patience with me?" [Musa (Moses)] said: "If I ask you anything after this, keep me not in your company, you have received an excuse from me." Then they both proceeded, till, when they came to the people of a town, they asked them for food, but they refused to entertain them. Then they found therein a wall about to collapse and he (Al-Khadir) set it up straight. (Musa (Moses)] said: If you had wished, surely, you could have taken wages for it!" (Al-Khadir) said: "This is the parting between me and you, I will tell you the interpretation of (those)

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[1] Narrated Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him): The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: "*Allah forgives my followers those (evil deeds) their own selves may whisper or suggest to them as long as they do not act (on it) or speak.*" (Sahih Al-Bukhari)

Narrated Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him): The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: "*If somebody eats something forgetfully while he is fasting, then he should complete his fast, for Allah has made him eat and drink.*" (Sahih Al-Bukhari)

things over which you were unable to hold patience. As for the ship, it belonged to Masakin (poor people) working in the sea. So I wished to make a defective damage in it, as there was a king behind them who seized every ship by force. And as for the boy, his parents were believers, and we feared lest he should oppress them by rebellion and disbelief. So we intended that their Lord should change him for them for one better in righteousness and nearer to mercy. And as for the wall, it belonged to two orphan boys in the town; and there was under it a treasure belonging to them; and their father was a righteous man, and your Lord intended that they should attain their age of full strength and take out their treasure as a mercy from your Lord. And I did them not of my own accord. That is the interpretation of those (things) over which you could not hold patience}. (Al-Kahf, 60-82)

Some of the People of the Book said: the one who met Al-Khadir was Musa Ibn Misha Ibn Yusuf Ibn Ya`qub Ibn Ishaq Ibn Ibrahim, father of the Prophets. But, the most authentic view is that he was Musa Ibn `Imran, the Prophet sent by Allah to the Children of Israel.

Narrated Imam Al-Bukhari: I was told by Al-Hamidi after Sufyan after `Amr Ibn Dinar after

Sa`id Ibn Jubair as saying: *I said to Ibn `Abbas: "Nauf Al-Bakali claims that Moses (the companion of Al-Khadir) was not the Moses of Banu Israel but he was another Moses." Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) remarked that the enemy of Allah (Nauf) was a liar. Narrated Ubai bin Ka`b: The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: "Once Prophet Moses stood up and addressed Banu Israel. He was asked: "Who is the most learned man amongst the people?" He said: "I am the most learned." Allah admonished Moses as he did not attribute absolute knowledge to Him (Allah). So Allah inspired to him, "At the junction of the two seas there is a slave of mine who is more learned than you." Moses said: "O my Lord! How can I meet him?" Allah Almighty said: "Take a fish in a large basket (and proceed) and you will find him at the place where you will lose the fish." So Moses set out along with his (servant) boy, Yusha` bin Nun and carried a fish in a large basket till they reached a rock, where they laid their heads (i.e. lay down) and slept. The fish came out of the basket and it took its way into the sea as in a tunnel. So it was an amazing thing for both Moses and his (servant) boy. They proceeded for the rest of that night and the following day. When the day broke, Moses said to his (servant) boy:* ***{Bring us our early meal. No doubt, we have suffered much fatigue in this journey}****. Moses did not get tired till he passed the place about which he*

was told. There the (servant) boy told Moses: ***{Do you remember when we betook ourselves to the rock, I indeed forgot the fish}****. Moses remarked:* ***{That is what we have been seeking. So they went back retracing their footsteps}****, till they reached the rock. There they saw a man covered with a garment (or covering himself with his own garment). Moses greeted him. Al-Khadir replied saying: "How do people greet each other in your land?" Moses said: "I am Moses." He asked: "The Moses of Banu Israel?" Moses replied in the affirmative and added: "May I follow you so that you teach me of that knowledge which you have been taught." Al-Khadir replied: "Verily! You will not be able to remain patient with me, O Moses! I have some of the knowledge of Allah which He has taught me and which you do not know, while you have some knowledge which Allah has taught you which I do not know." Moses said: "Allah willing, you will find me patient and I will not disobey you in aught. So both of them set out walking along the seashore, as they did not have a boat. In the meantime a boat passed by them and they requested the crew of the boat to take them on board. The crew recognized Al-Khadir and took them on board without fare. Then a sparrow came and stood on the edge of the boat and dipped its beak once or twice in the sea. Al-Khadir said: "O Moses! My knowledge and your knowledge have not decreased Allah's knowledge except as*

much as this sparrow has decreased the water of the sea with its beak." Al-Khadir went to one of the planks of the boat and plucked it out. Moses said: "These people gave us a free lift but you have broken their boat and scuttled it so as to drown its people." Al-Khadir replied: "Didn't I tell you that you will not be able to remain patient with me." Moses said: "Call me not to account for what I forgot." The first (excuse) of Moses was that he had forgotten. Then they proceeded further and found a boy playing with other boys. Al-Khadir took hold of the boy's head from the top and plucked it out with his hands (i.e. killed him). Moses said: "Have you killed an innocent soul who has killed none." Al-Khadir replied: "Did I not tell you that you cannot remain patient with me?" Then they both proceeded till when they came to the people of a town, they asked them for food, but they refused to entertain them. Then they found there a wall on the point of collapsing. Al-Khadir repaired it with his own hands. Moses said: "If you had wished, surely you could have taken wages for it." Al-Khadir replied: "This is the parting between you and me." The Prophet (Muhammad (Peace be upon him)) added: "May Allah be Merciful to Moses! Would that he could have been more patient to learn more about his story with Al-Khadir." (Sahih Al-Bukhari)

Allah the Almighty says: ***{And as for the wall, it belonged to two orphan boys in the town}***, As-Suhaili said: they were Asram and Sarim sons of Kashih. ***{And there was under it a treasure belonging to them}***, i.e. the treasure was gold, or some kind of knowledge. However, the most likely view is that it was some kind of knowledge inscribed on a golden board.

Al-Bazzar said: I was told by Ibrahim Ibn Sa`id Al-Jauhari after Bishr Ibn Al-Mundhir after Al-Harith Ibn `Abdullah Al-Yahbasi after `Iyad Ibn `Abbas Al-Ghassani after Ibn Hujairah after Abu Dharr as saying: "The treasure mentioned in Allah's Book (the Glorious Qur'an) was a solid golden board where it was inscribed: I wondered at the one who affirmed faith in the Divine Decree and then he exerted himself; and I wondered at the one who remembered Hell-Fire and then he laughed; and I wondered at the one who remembered death and then he became heedless of the meaning of 'There is no god but Allah.'" The like was narrated by Al-Hasan Al-Basri, `Umar the freed slave of `Afrah and Ja`far As-Sadiq.

Allah's Saying: ***{And their father was a righteous man}***, i.e. their seventh or tenth grandfather. However, this proves that the

righteousness of the father benefits his own children and their children.

Allah's Saying: ***{as a mercy from your Lord}***, this is a textual proof that Al-Khadir was a Prophet and that he did not do anything out of his own desire but as ordered by Allah the Almighty.

Al-Khadir's Name, Lineage and Prophethood: Is He Still Alive?

The real name, lineage and status of Al-Khadir are controversial. This can be added to the very important question: is he still alive?

Al-Hafiz Ibn `Asakir said: He is said to be Al-Khadir son of Adam.

Ibn Qutaibah said: His name was Balya – or Aylya – Ibn Malakan Ibn Faligh Ibn `Abir Ibn Shalikh Ibn Arfakhshdh Ibn Sam Ibn Noah (Peace be upon him).

Isma`il Ibn Abu Uwais said: His name was Al-Mu`amir Ibn Malik Ibn `Abdullah Ibn Nasr Ibn Lazd.

Others said: He is Khadrun Ibn `Amyaiyl Ibn Al-Yafiz Ibn Al-`Iys Ibn Ishaq Ibn Prophet Ibrahim

(Peace be upon him). There are so many other views pertaining to his name and lineage.

Imam Al-Bukhari said: I was told by Muhammad Ibn Sa`id Al-Asbahani after Ibn Al-Mubarak after Mu`amir after Hammam on the authority of Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: "*Al-Khadir was named so because he sat over a barren white land, it turned green with plantation after (his sitting over It).*"

Qabisah narrated on the authority of Ath-Thauri after Mansur after Mujahid as saying: Al-Khadir was named so because everything around him used to turn into green when he stands for prayer. It was stated earlier that Moses and Yusha` (Peace be upon them) went back retracing their footsteps, till they reached the rock. There they saw a man covered with a green garment (or covering himself with his own garment). Moses greeted him. Al-Khadir replied saying: "How do people greet each other in your land?" Moses said: "I am Moses." He asked: "The Moses of Banu Israel?" Moses replied in the affirmative and added: "May I follow you so that you teach me of that knowledge which you have been taught.... etc."

The Story Indicated His Prophethood in Four Aspects:

First: Allah the Almighty says: *{Then they found one of Our slaves, on whom We had bestowed mercy from Us, and whom We had taught knowledge from Us}*. (Al-Kahf, 65)

Second: Moses says to Al-Khadir: *{Musa (Moses) said to him (Al-Khadir): "May I follow you so that you teach me something of that knowledge (guidance and true path) which you have been taught (by Allah)?" He (Al-Khadir) said: "Verily you will not be able to have patience with me! And how can you have patience about a thing which you know not." Musa (Moses) said: "If Allah wills, you will find me patient, and I will not disobey you in aught." He (Al-Khadir) said: "Then, if you follow me, ask me not about anything till I myself mention of it to you"}*. (Al-Kahf, 66-70) So, were he not a Prophet, Moses would not address him that way, and he would not answer Moses that way as well. Moses sought his company because he wanted to get some of the knowledge Al-Khadir was given by Allah and that which Moses did not get. Were Al-Khadir anything but a Prophet, he would not be infallible. Thus, Moses would not be keen to accompany him because Moses himself was an honorable Prophet

and an infallible Messenger. Were Al-Khadir anything but a Prophet, Moses would not take the trouble of searching for him for eighty years. When Moses met with Al-Khadir, Moses highly respected him and followed him submissively to gain as much as possible of his divine knowledge.

Third: Al-Khadir intentionally killed the boy. He would not do that without an inspiration from Allah Almighty ordering him to. This incident can stand as a separate proof that Al-Khadir was a Prophet. It can stand as well, as a proof that he was infallible. Al-Khadir killed the boy because he was inspired that the boy would be a disbeliever when he grows up and that his parents would follow him due to their earnest love for him. So he killed him to save the faith of the parents. This indicated that he was an infallible Prophet.

Fourth: When Al-Khadir interpreted and explained for Moses the actions he took and clarified everything to him he added: ***{As a mercy from your Lord. And I did them not of my own accord}***, i.e. I did not do that out of my desire, instead, I was ordered to by divine inspiration. All these indicated his Prophethood and infallibility.

Is Al-Khadir Still Alive?

The majority of scholars said: "Al-Khadir is still alive because he was the one who buried Adam (Peace be upon him) after the Deluge and thus he was affected by the invocation of Adam that he who buries him will live long." Some people said: "he is still alive because he drank of the spring of life."

There are so many narrations and stories on which those who viewed the existence of Al-Khadir today based their opinion. But, all the narrations and Hadiths pertaining to that issue are weak and invented and those who narrated them are not infallible.

`Abdur Razzaq said: I was told by Mu`amir that Abu Sa`id Al-Khudri said: "*One day Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) narrated to us a long narration about Ad-Dajjal and among the things he narrated to us, was: 'Ad-Dajjal will come, and he will be forbidden to enter the mountain passes of Medina. He will encamp in one of the salt areas neighboring Medina and there will appear to him a man who will be the best or one of the best of the people. He will say: 'I testify that you are Ad-Dajjal whose story Allah's Messenger has told us.' Ad-Dajjal will say (to his audience): 'Look, if I kill this man and then give him life, will you have any doubt*

about my claim?' They will reply: 'No.' Then Ad-Dajjal will kill that man and then will make him alive. The man will say: 'By Allah, now I recognize you more than ever!' Ad-Dajjal will then try to kill him (again) but he will not be given the power to do so.'" Mu`amir said: I was told that the man who stands against the Dajjal is Al-Khadir and that his neck on that day would be covered with brass.

Sheik Abu Al-Faraj Ibn Al-Jawzi refuted all these Hadiths and proved them all to be invented, and he proved the Chains of Transmission of the narrations and stories of the Prophet's Companions and followers to be weak and fallible. Indeed, Ibn Al-Jawzi was very powerful and authentic in doing so.

As for those who claimed Al-Khadir to be dead such as Imam Al-Bukhari, Abu Al-Husain Ibn Al-Munadi and sheik Abu Al-Faraj Ibn Al-Jawzi, they held as their textual proofs what follows: Allah the Almighty says: ***{And We granted not to any human being immortality before you (O Muhammad (Peace be upon him)): then if you die, would they live forever?}***. (Al-Anbyia', 34) So if Al-Khadir was a human being, he would be affected by this ruling: he is mortal, he must die. Allah the Almighty says: ***{And (remember) when Allah took the Covenant of the Prophets, saying: "Take whatever I gave you from the Book and Hikmah (understanding of the***

Laws of Allah), and afterwards there will come to you a Messenger (Muhammad (Peace be upon him)) confirming what is with you; you must, then, believe in him and help him." Allah said: "Do you agree (to it) and will you take up My Covenant (which I conclude with you)?" They said: "We agree." He said: "Then bear witness; and I am with you among the witnesses (for this)"}. (Al `Imran, 81) Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) said: Allah took the Covenant of all the Prophets to believe in Muhammad and support him if he appears during their lifetimes. In addition, they should take the Covenant of all their own nations to believe in him and support him in the same way. Thereupon, were Al-Khadir a Prophet or a *Wali* (protector or guardian), he would be involved in that Covenant and that were he alive during the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him), he would follow him and present himself before him paying allegiance and absolute faith.

Imam Ahmed narrated: I was told by Shuraih Ibn An-Nu`man after Hashim after Mujalid after Ash-Shi`bi after Jabir Ibn `Abdullah that the Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: "*By Him in Whose Hand my soul is! Were Moses alive, he would do nothing but follow me.*" This is the decisive view which the earlier Qur'anic Verse indicates that all Prophets – if they happen to live during the lifetime of Prophet

Muhammad – are ordered to follow him and practice his own *Shari`ah*. On the Night Journey, he (Peace be upon him) was raised far above them all.[1] When they descended to Jerusalem and the time for Prayer was due, he (Peace be upon him) was ordered to lead them all (in Prayer). This showed that he is the greatest Imam and the last Prophet who is most honored and respected (May Allah grant him and them all mercy).

Thereupon, if Al-Khadir were alive, he would be joining forces with Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him), and he would follow his religion in every minute detail. This is Prophet `Isa (Jesus (Peace be upon him)) when he will descends by the end of time, he will rule over the whole world in accordance with this honorable legislation of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him). However, there is nothing to certify that Al-Khadir has met together with Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) in a single day or even witnessed any fight with him against the polytheists or the infidels. On the day on which the Battle of Badr was fought, the Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him) cast a glance at the infidels, and they were one thousand (1000) while his own Companions were three hundred and

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[1] I.e. Near *Sidrat-ul-Muntaha* (a lote-tree of the utmost boundary over the seventh heaven beyond which none can pass). (Translator)

nineteen (319). Allah's Prophet (Peace be upon him) turned (his face) towards the *Qiblah*. Then, he stretched his hands and began his supplication to his Lord: *'O Allah! Accomplish for me what Thou hast promised to me. O Allah! Bring about what Thou hast promised to me. O Allah! If this small band of Muslims is destroyed, Thou will not be worshipped on this earth.' He (Peace be upon him) continued his supplication to his Lord, stretching his hands, facing the Qiblah, until his mantle slipped down from his shoulders. So Abu Bakr (May Allah be pleased with him) came to him, picked up his mantle and put it on his shoulders. Then he (Abu Bakr) embraced him from behind and said: O Prophet of Allah! This prayer of yours to your Lord will suffice you, and He will fulfil for you what He has promised you. So Allah, the Glorious and Exalted, revealed (the Qur'anic verse):* ***{(Remember) when you sought help of your Lord and He answered you (saying): I will help you with a thousand of the angels each behind the other (following one another) in succession}***. (Al-Anfal, 9) *So Allah helped him with angels."* (Sahih Muslim) However, this '*small band of Muslims*' consisted, then, of the chiefs from among the Muslims and the angels, foremost among whom was Jibril (Gabriel (Peace be upon him)). Thus, if Al-Khadir were alive, his presence, then, would be the best thing he could ever do. Narrated Al-Qadi Abu Ya`la Muhammad Ibn Al-Husain Al-

Fara' Al-Hanbali: Some people asked some of our companions about Al-Khadir, was he dead? They answered: "Yes."

Some people claim that Al-Khadir was present during all these past events but no one could see him because he was invisible. Obviously, this claim is groundless and is based only on illusions. Indeed, if he was still alive during the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him), he would certainly join him in his fight against the polytheists of the tribe of Quraish. See the following Hadith: Narrated Sa`d (May Allah be pleased with him): "*On the Day of Uhud I saw on the right side of Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) and on his left side two persons dressed in white clothes and whom I did not see before nor after that, and they were Gabriel and Michael (may Allah be pleased with both of them).*" (Sahih Muslim)

In addition, `Abdullah Ibn `Umar (May Allah be pleased with both of them) said: "*Once the Prophet (Peace be upon him) led us in the `Isha' (Night) Prayer during the last days of his life and after finishing it (the Prayer) (with Taslim, i.e. final salutation) he said: 'Do you realize (the importance of) this night? Nobody present on the surface of the earth tonight will be living after the completion of one hundred years from this night.'*" (Sahih Al-

Bukhari) And, `Abdullah Ibn `Umar (May Allah be pleased with both of them) narrated: "*Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) led us in the `Isha' (Night) Prayer at the latter part of the night and when he had concluded it by salutations he stood up and said: 'Have you seen this night of yours? At the end of one hundred years after this (night) none would survive on the surface of the earth (from among my Companions).' Ibn `Umar said: People were (not understanding) these words of the Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him) which had been uttered pertaining to one hundred years. Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) in fact meant (by these words) that on that day none from amongst those who had been living upon the earth (from amongst his Companions) would survive (after one hundred years) and that would be the end of this generation.*" (Sahih Muslim) And, Jabir Ibn `Abdullah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: "*I heard Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) as saying this one month before his death: 'You asked me about the Last Hour whereas its knowledge is with Allah. I, however, take an oath and say that none upon the earth, the created beings (from amongst my Companions), would survive at the end of one hundred years.'*" This Hadith has been narrated on the authority of Ibn Juraij with the same chain of transmitters, but there is no mention of the words: "*one month before his death.*" (Sahih

Muslim) So, even if Al-Khadir were alive during the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him), he would, then, be dead in accordance with these above-mentioned Hadiths. And, Allah knows best!

(6)

The Story of Qarun (Korah)

Allah the Almighty says:

إِنَّ قَارُونَ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمِ مُوسَى فَبَغَى عَلَيْهِمْ وَآتَيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْكُنُوزِ مَا إِنَّ
مَفَاتِحَهُ لَتَنُوءُ بِالْعُصْبَةِ أُولِي الْقُوَّةِ إِذْ قَالَ لَهُ قَوْمُهُ لا تَفْرَحْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لا يُحِبُّ
الْفَرِحِينَ (٧٦)وَابْتَغِ فِيمَا آتَاكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ الآخِرَةَ وَلا تَنسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا
وَأَحْسِنْ كَمَا أَحْسَنَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ وَلا تَبْغِ الْفَسَادَ فِي الأَرْضِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لا يُحِبُّ
الْمُفْسِدِينَ(٧٧) قَالَ إِنَّمَا أُوتِيتُهُ عَلَى عِلْمٍ عِندِي أَوَلَمْ يَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَهْلَكَ
مِنْ قَبْلِهِ مِنَ الْقُرُونِ مَنْ هُوَ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُ قُوَّةً وَأَكْثَرُ جَمْعًا وَلا يُسْأَلُ عَنْ ذُنُوبِهِمُ
الْمُجْرِمُونَ(٧٨)فَخَرَجَ عَلَى قَوْمِهِ فِي زِينَتِهِ قَالَ الَّذِينَ يُرِيدُونَ الْحَيَاةَ
الدُّنيَا يَالَيْتَ لَنَا مِثْلَ مَا أُوتِيَ قَارُونُ إِنَّهُ لَذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ(٧٩)وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ
أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ وَيْلَكُمْ ثَوَابُ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِمَنْ آمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا وَلا يُلَقَّاهَا إِلا
الصَّابِرُونَ(٨٠) فَخَسَفْنَا بِهِ وَبِدَارِهِ الأَرْضَ فَمَا كَانَ لَهُ مِنْ فِئَةٍ يَنصُرُونَهُ
مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُنْتَصِرِينَ(٨١)وَأَصْبَحَ الَّذِينَ تَمَنَّوْا مَكَانَهُ بِالأَمْسِ
يَقُولُونَ وَيْكَأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ وَيَقْدِرُ لَوْلا أَنْ مَنَّ اللَّهُ
عَلَيْنَا لَخَسَفَ بِنَا وَيْكَأَنَّهُ لا يُفْلِحُ الْكَافِرُونَ(٨٢)تِلْكَ الدَّارُ الآخِرَةُ نَجْعَلُهَا

لِلَّذِينَ لا يُرِيدُونَ عُلُوًّا فِي الأَرْضِ وَلا فَسَــــادًا وَالْعَاقِبَــةُ لِلْمُتَّقِــينَ(٨٣)
(القصص: ٧٦-٨٣)

{Verily, Qarun (Korah) was of Musa's (Moses) people, but he behaved arrogantly towards them. And We gave him of the treasures, that of which the keys would have been a burden to a body of strong men. Remember when his people said to him: "Do not exult (with riches, being ungrateful to Allah). Verily Allah likes not those who exult (with riches, being ungrateful to Allah). "But seek with that (wealth) which Allah has bestowed on you, the home of the Hereafter, and forget not your portion of lawful enjoyment in this world; and do good as Allah has been good to you, and seek not mischief in the land. Verily, Allah likes not the Mufsidun (those who commit great crimes and sins, oppressors, tyrants, mischief-makers, corrupters)." He said: "This has been given to me only because of the knowledge I possess." Did he not know that Allah had destroyed before him generations, men who were stronger than him in might and greater in the amount (of riches) they had collected? But the Mujrimun (criminals, disbelievers, polytheists, sinners) will not be questioned of their sins (because Allah knows them well, so they will be punished without being called to account). So he

went forth before his people in his pomp. Those who were desirous of the life of the world, said: "Ah, would that we had the like of what Qarun (Korah) has been given! Verily he is the owner of a great fortune." But those who had been given (religious) knowledge said: "Woe to you! The Reward of Allah (in the Hereafter) is better for those who believe and do righteous good deeds, and this none shall attain except those who are As-Sabirun (the patient in following the truth)." So We caused the earth to swallow him and his dwelling place. Then he had no group or party to help him against Allah, nor was he one of those who could save themselves. And those who had desired (for a position like) his position the day before, began to say: "Know you not that it is Allah Who enlarges the provision or restricts it to whomsoever He pleases of His slaves. Had it not been that Allah was Gracious to us, He could have caused the earth to swallow us up (also)! Know you not that the disbelievers will never be successful." That home of the Hereafter (i.e. Paradise), We shall assign to those who rebel not against the truth with pride and oppression in the land nor do mischief by committing crimes. And the good end is for the Muttaqun (the pious and righteous persons)}. (Al-Qasas, 76-83)

Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) held the opinion that Qarun (Koran) was a paternal cousin to Musa (Peace be upon him). This view is supported by many other narrators, including Ibn Juraij who added that he is Qarun Ibn Yashar Ibn Qahith, while Musa was the son of `Imran Ibn Hafith. Ibn Juraij went further and rejected the viewpoint of Ibn Ishaq that he was a paternal uncle to Musa (Peace be upon him).

Qatadah said: He was called "*An-Nur*" (the light) for he had a melodious voice while reciting the Torah (*Taurat*), but he became a hypocrite just like As-Samiri who became a hypocrite too. Thus, Qarun was destroyed because of his transgression due to the wealth and riches he had.

Shahr Ibn Haushab said: he dragged his garment out of pride and arrogance (conceit).

Allah the Almighty mentioned the numerousness of his wealth and riches so that its keys would have been a burden to a body of strong men. It was also said: the keys were made of leather and that they used to be carried on sixty mules. Allah knows best!

However, he was advised by the godly men from among his people saying: ***{Do not exult}*** i.e. do not be arrogant or conceited with riches, being

ungrateful to Allah the Almighty. ***{Verily Allah likes not those who exult (with riches, being ungrateful to Allah). "But seek with that (wealth) which Allah has bestowed on you, the home of the Hereafter}*** they advise him to direct his endeavors to gain Allah's Reward in the Hereafter as it is the best of all rewards. But, ***{and forget not your portion of lawful enjoyment in this world}***, i.e. take thereof with your money what is made lawful to you and have the possible lawful joys of this present life. And ***{do good as Allah has been good to you}***, i.e. do good to the creation of Allah Who has been good to you. And ***{seek not mischief in the land}***, i.e. do not harm the people regarding whom you were commanded to do good. If you harm them, He will punish you and take back what He has granted you ***{Verily, Allah likes not the Mufsidun (those who commit great crimes and sins, oppressors, tyrants, mischief-makers, corrupters)}***. His answer to this good advice of his people was nothing but: ***{He said: This has been given to me only because of the knowledge I possess}***, i.e. I do not need what you have said or referred to, as Allah only gave me this for He knew that I deserve it and I am really qualified thereto. Moreover, were it not for that He loves me, He would not grant or give me this.

However, Allah the Almighty refuted his

statement saying: ***{Did he not know that Allah had destroyed before him generations, men who were stronger than him in might and greater in the amount (of riches) they had collected? But the Mujrimun (criminals, disbelievers, polytheists, sinners) will not be questioned of their sins (because Allah knows them well, so they will be punished without being called to account)}***, i.e. We have destroyed before him generations because of their sins and bad deeds and that they were stronger than Qarun and they had more riches and children than him. So, if what he said was true, We would not punish anyone of those who had more riches than him and his wealth and riches would not be a proof of Our love or care for him. Allah the Almighty says: ***{And it is not your wealth, nor your children that bring you nearer to Us (i.e. please Allah), but only he who believes (in the Islamic Monotheism), and does righteous deeds (will please Us); as for such, there will be twofold reward for what they did, and they will reside in the high dwellings (Paradise) in peace and security}***. (Saba', 37) and, He says: ***{Do they think that in wealth and children with which We enlarge them. We hasten unto them with good things. Nay, [it is a Fitnah (trial) in this worldly life so that they will have no share of good things in the Hereafter] but they perceive not}***. (Al-Mu'minun, 55, 56). Allah's answer to Qarun's

claims confirms our interpretation of his saying, ***{This has been given to me only because of the knowledge I possess}***. But as for those who claimed that he was a chemist or that he knew the Greatest Name of Allah the Almighty and that he used it to collect wealth, all these are fallacies and not true. For chemistry cannot change the reality of something, and the Greatest Name is of no effect if it is pronounced by a disbeliever. And, Qarun was inherently a disbeliever and apparently a hypocrite. Moreover, the context of the advice given by his people and his answer to them do not support that claim.

Almighty Allah says: ***{So he went forth before his people in his pomp}***, many interpreters mentioned that he went forth before his people in great luxuries (servants, clothes and riding animals). When those who were desirous of the life of the world saw him, they wished to have the same and wondered "what a great fortune he has!" When their saying reached the ears of the godly righteous men they said to them: ***{Woe to you! The Reward of Allah is better for those who believe and do righteous good deeds}***, i.e. the Reward of Allah in the Hereafter is better and higher than this.

Almighty Allah says: ***{and this none shall attain except those who are As-Sabirun (the patient in***

following the truth)}, i.e. this - advice, saying and high determination regarding the Hereafter in presence of the joys of this present life - none shall attain except those who were guided and those whose hearts were fixed and minds made stable by the Grace of Allah the Almighty. And, nothing is better than the saying of some of our earlier scholars who said: "Verily, Allah loves penetrative insight in time of suspicious matters and perfect reasoning in time of the presence of lusts".

Allah the Almighty says: ***{So, We caused the earth to swallow him and his dwelling place. Then, he had no group or party to help him against Allah, nor was he one of those who could save themselves}***, when Allah the Almighty mentioned his setting forth in his pomp, He said ***{So, We caused the earth to swallow him and his dwelling place}***. As transmitted by Imam Al-Bukhari, Allah's Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: *"While a man was walking, clad in a two-piece garment and proud of himself with his hair well-combed, suddenly Allah made him sink into the earth and he will go on sinking into it till the Day of Resurrection."* (Sahih Al-Bukhari)

Narrated Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) and As-Sadiy that Qarun gave a prostitute a sum of money to say to Musa (Peace be upon him)

while he is accompanied with other people that he (Musa) committed with her (adultery). It is said that she did it and consequently, Musa (Peace be upon him) trembled with fear and he performed two *Rak`ahs* (bowing in prayer) and then said to her: By Allah! Tell me, who hired you to do this? She said: It was Qarun who hired me to do that. Then, she sought Allah's Forgiveness and repented to Him. Upon that, he (Musa (Peace be upon him)) prostrated himself and invoked Allah against Qarun. Allah the Almighty revealed to him that He subjugated the earth to obey him. Musa (Peace be upon him) commanded the earth to swallow Qarun and his dwelling place. And it was! Allah knows best!

It was also said: That when Qarun went forth before his people in his pomp: guards, mules and clothes, he passed by Musa (Peace be upon him) while he was reminding the people of Allah. When the people saw him, the faces of most of them turned towards him. Musa (Peace be upon him) called him and said: Why do you do this? Qarun replied saying: O Musa! You have been favored with Prophethood and I have been favored with riches. If you want, you may go forth and invoke Allah against me, and I would invoke Him against you. Thereupon, both of them went forth and Musa (Peace be upon him) said: Would you like to begin? Qarun said: Yes, and he made his invocations but they were not answered.

When Musa (Peace be upon him) invoked Allah the Almighty against him saying: O Allah! Command the earth to transgress today. Allah revealed to him that He did. Then, Musa (Peace be upon him) said: O earth! Take them! And it took them to their feet. Then, he said: take them! And it took them to their knees. Then, he said: take them! And it took them to their shoulders. Then, he said: O earth! Bring their riches and treasures! They were brought till they saw them, then Musa (Peace be upon him) pointed with his hand saying: Go, you sons of Laui! And they sank into the earth.

It was narrated from Qatadah that he said: "They would sink into the earth till the Day of Resurrection." Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) said: "They sank into the earth till they reached the seventh earth."

Allah the Almighty says: ***{Then he had no group or party to help him against Allah, nor was he one of those who could save themselves}***, i.e. he could not help himself or get help from others. Allah the Almighty states: ***{Then he will have no power, nor any helper}***. (At-Tariq, 10) When the people saw what happened to Qarun and his treasures of sinking into the earth and complete destruction, those who had desired for a position like his position the day before regretted and thanked Allah the Almighty

and hence they said: ***{Had it not been that Allah was Gracious to us, He could have caused the earth to swallow us up (also)! Know you not that the disbelievers will never be successful}***.

Then, Allah the Almighty informs us that ***{That home of the Hereafter}***, i.e. Paradise is prepared only for those ***{who rebel not against the truth with pride and oppression in the land nor do mischief by committing crimes}*** and then He says: ***{And the good end is for the Muttaqun (the pious and righteous persons)}***.

This story of Qarun might have taken place before they get out of Egypt for Allah the Almighty says: ***{So, We caused the earth to swallow him and his dwelling place}***, or it might have taken place after that during the Diaspora. Allah knows best!

However, Almighty Allah mentions the dispraise of Qarun in several Verses on the Glorious Qur'an. Allah says: ***{And indeed We sent Musa (Moses) with Our Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.), and a manifest authority. To Fir`aun (Pharaoh), Haman and Qarun (Korah), but they called (him): "A sorcerer, a liar!"}***. (Ghafir, 23, 24) and, in Surah Al-`Ankabut after mentioning `Ad, Thamud, Pharaoh, Haman and

Qarun, He says: ***{And (We destroyed also) Qarun (Korah), Fir`aun (Pharaoh), and Haman. And indeed Musa (Moses) came to them with lessons, clear Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, signs, revelations, etc.), but they were arrogant in the land, yet they could not outstrip Us (escape Our punishment). So, We punished each (of them) for his sins; of them were some on whom We sent Hasib (a violent wind with shower of stones) [as on the people of Lut (Lot)], and of them were some who were overtaken by As-Saihah [torment - awful cry, (as Thamud or Shu`aib's People)], and of them were some whom We caused the earth to swallow [as Qarun (Korah)], and of them were some whom We drowned [as the people of Nuh (Noah), or Fir`aun (Pharaoh) and his people]. It was not Allah Who wronged them, but they wronged themselves}***. (Al-`Ankabut, 39, 40) so, he who was swallowed by the earth was Qarun, and those whom were drowned were Pharaoh, Haman and their troops because they were sinful.

Imam Ahmed, in his *Musnad*, reported that once the Prophet (Peace be upon him) remembered the prayer and said: *"He who observes it regularly and properly, it will be light, evidence and salvation for him on the Day of Resurrection. And, he who does not observe it regularly and properly, there will*

neither be – for him – light, nor evidence, nor salvation. And, on the Day of Resurrection, he will be (gathered) with Qarun, Fir`aun (Pharaoh), Haman and Ubaiy Ibn Khalaf".

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

(7)

Bilqis (Queen of Sheba)

Allah the Almighty says:

وَتَفَقَّدَ الطَّيْرَ فَقَالَ مَا لِي لا أَرَى الْهُدْهُدَ أَمْ كَانَ مِنَ الْغَائِبِينَ(٢٠)
لأُعَذِّبَنَّهُ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا أَوْ لأَذْبَحَنَّهُ أَوْ لَيَأْتِيَنِّي بِسُلْطَانٍ مُبِينٍ(٢١)فَمَكَثَ
غَيْرَ بَعِيدٍ فَقَالَ أَحَطتُ بِمَا لَمْ تُحِطْ بِهِ وَجِئْتُكَ مِنْ سَبَإٍ بِنَبَإٍ يَقِينٍ(٢٢)
إِنِّي وَجَدتُّ امْرَأَةً تَمْلِكُهُمْ وَأُوتِيَتْ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَلَهَا عَرْشٌ
عَظِيمٌ(٢٣)وَجَدْتُهَا وَقَوْمَهَا يَسْجُدُونَ لِلشَّمْسِ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ
الشَّيْطَانُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ فَصَدَّهُمْ عَنْ السَّبِيلِ فَهُمْ لا يَهْتَدُونَ(٢٤) أَلا يَسْجُدُوا
لِلَّهِ الَّذِي يُخْرِجُ الْخَبْءَ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تُخْفُونَ وَمَا
تُعْلِنُونَ(٢٥)اللَّهُ لا إِلَهَ إِلا هُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ(٢٦)قَالَ سَنَنظُرُ أَصَدَقْتَ
أَمْ كُنتَ مِنْ الْكَاذِبِينَ(٢٧)اذْهَب بِكِتَابِي هَذَا فَأَلْقِهِ إِلَيْهِمْ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ
فَانظُرْ مَاذَا يَرْجِعُونَ(٢٨)قَالَتْ يَاأَيُّهَا الْمَلأُ إِنِّي أُلْقِيَ إِلَيَّ كِتَابٌ كَرِيمٌ(٢٩)إِنَّهُ
مِنْ سُلَيْمَانَ وَإِنَّهُ بِاسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَانِ الرَّحِيمِ(٣٠)أَلا تَعْلُوا عَلَيَّ وَأْتُونِي
مُسْلِمِينَ(٣١) قَالَتْ يَاأَيُّهَا الْمَلأُ أَفْتُونِي فِي أَمْرِي مَا كُنتُ قَاطِعَةً أَمْرًا حَتَّى
تَشْهَدُونِ (٣٢)قَالُوا نَحْنُ أُوْلُوا قُوَّةٍ وَأُولُوا بَأْسٍ شَدِيدٍ وَالأَمْرُ إِلَيْكِ

فَانظُرِي مَاذَا تَأْمُرِينَ(٣٣)قَالَتْ إِنَّ الْمُلُوكَ إِذَا دَخَلُوا قَرْيَةً أَفْسَدُوهَا وَجَعَلُوا أَعِزَّةَ أَهْلِهَا أَذِلَّةً وَكَذَلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ(٣٤)وَإِنِّي مُرْسِلَةٌ إِلَيْهِمْ بِهَدِيَّةٍ فَنَاظِرَةٌ بِمَ يَرْجِعُ الْمُرْسَلُونَ(٣٥)فَلَمَّا جَاءَ سُلَيْمَانَ قَالَ أَتُمِدُّونَنِي بِمَالٍ فَمَا آتَانِي اللَّهُ خَيْرٌ مِمَّا آتَاكُمْ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ بِهَدِيَّتِكُمْ تَفْرَحُونَ(٣٦) ارْجِعْ إِلَيْهِمْ فَلَنَأْتِيَنَّهُمْ بِجُنُودٍ لا قِبَلَ لَهُمْ بِهَا وَلَنُخْرِجَنَّهُمْ مِنْهَا أَذِلَّةً وَهُمْ صَاغِرُونَ(٣٧)قَالَ يَاأَيُّهَا الْمَلأُ أَيُّكُمْ يَأْتِينِي بِعَرْشِهَا قَبْلَ أَنْ يَأْتُونِي مُسْلِمِينَ (٣٨)قَالَ عِفْرِيتٌ مِنْ الْجِنِّ أَنَا آتِيكَ بِهِ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَقُومَ مِنْ مَقَامِكَ وَإِنِّي عَلَيْهِ لَقَوِيٌّ أَمِينٌ(٣٩) قَالَ الَّذِي عِنْدَهُ عِلْمٌ مِنْ الْكِتَابِ أَنَا آتِيكَ بِهِ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَرْتَدَّ إِلَيْكَ طَرْفُكَ فَلَمَّا رَآهُ مُسْتَقِرًّا عِنْدَهُ قَالَ هَذَا مِنْ فَضْلِ رَبِّي لِيَبْلُوَنِي أَأَشْكُرُ أَمْ أَكْفُرُ وَمَنْ شَكَرَ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ رَبِّي غَنِيٌّ كَرِيمٌ(٤٠)قَالَ نَكِّرُوا لَهَا عَرْشَهَا نَنظُرْ أَتَهْتَدِي أَمْ تَكُونُ مِنْ الَّذِينَ لا يَهْتَدُونَ(٤١)فَلَمَّا جَاءَتْ قِيلَ أَهَكَذَا عَرْشُكِ قَالَتْ كَأَنَّهُ هُوَ وَأُوتِينَا الْعِلْمَ مِنْ قَبْلِهَا وَكُنَّا مُسْلِمِينَ(٤٢) وَصَدَّهَا مَا كَانَتْ تَعْبُدُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنَّهَا كَانَتْ مِنْ قَوْمٍ كَافِرِينَ(٤٣)قِيلَ لَهَا ادْخُلِي الصَّرْحَ فَلَمَّا رَأَتْهُ حَسِبَتْهُ لُجَّةً وَكَشَفَتْ عَنْ سَاقَيْهَا قَالَ إِنَّهُ صَرْحٌ مُمَرَّدٌ مِنْ قَوَارِيرَ قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي وَأَسْلَمْتُ مَعَ سُلَيْمَانَ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ(٤٤) (النمل : ٢٠-٤٤)

{He inspected the birds, and said: "What is the matter that I see not the hoopoe? Or is he among the absentees? "I will surely punish him with a severe torment, or slaughter him, unless he brings me a clear reason." But the hoopoe stayed not

long: he (came up and) said: "I have grasped (the knowledge of a thing) which you have not grasped and I have come to you from Saba' (Sheba) with true news." "I found a woman ruling over them: she has been given all things that could be possessed by any ruler of the earth, and she has a great throne. I found her and her people worshipping the sun instead of Allah, and Shaitan (Satan) has made their deeds fair-seeming to them, and has barred them from (Allah's) Way: so they have no guidance." [As Shaitan (Satan) has barred them from Allah's Way] so they do not worship (prostrate themselves before) Allah, Who brings to light what is hidden in the heavens and the earth, and knows what you conceal and what you reveal. Allah, La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), the Lord of the Supreme Throne! [Sulaiman (Solomon)] said: "We shall see whether you speak the truth or you are (one) of the liars. "Go you with this letter of mine, and deliver it to them, then draw back from them, and see what (answer) they return." She said: "O chiefs! Verily! Here is delivered to me a noble letter. "Verily it is from Sulaiman (Solomon), and verily, it (reads): In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful: "Be you not exalted against me, but come to me as Muslims (true believers who submit to Allah with full submission). She said: "O chiefs!

Advise me in (this) case of mine. I decide no case till you are present with me (and give me your opinions)." They said: "We have great strength, and great ability for war, but it is for you to command: so think over what you will command." She said: "Verily kings, when they enter a town (country), they despoil it and make the most honorable amongst its people the lowest. And thus they do. "But verily! I am going to send him a present, and see with what (answer) the Messengers return." So when (the messengers with the present) came to Sulaiman (Solomon), he said: "Will you help me in wealth? What Allah has given me is better than that which He has given you! Nay, you rejoice in your gift!" [Then Sulaiman (Solomon) said to the chief of her messengers who brought the present]: "Go back to them. We verily shall come to them with hosts that they cannot resist, and we shall drive them out from there in disgrace, and they will be abased." He said: "O chiefs! Which of you can bring me her throne before they come to me surrendering themselves in obedience?" A `Ifrit (strong one) from the jinn said: I will bring it to you before you rise from your place (council). And verily, I am indeed strong, and trustworthy for such work." One with whom was knowledge of the Scripture said: "I will bring it to you within the twinkling of an eye!" Then when he [Sulaiman

(Solomon)] saw it placed before him, he said: "This is by the Grace of my Lord - to test me whether I am grateful or ungrateful! And whoever is grateful, truly, his gratitude is for (the good of) his own self, and whoever is ungrateful, (he is ungrateful only for the loss of his own self. Certainly my Lord is Rich (Free of all needs), Bountiful." He said: "Disguise her throne for her that we may see whether she will be guided (to recognize her throne), or she will be one of those not guided." So when she came, it was said (to her): "Is your throne like this?" She said: "(It is) as though it were the very same." And [Sulaiman (Solomon)] said: "Knowledge was bestowed on us before her, and we were submitted to Allah (in Islam as Muslims before her)." And that which she used to worship besides Allah has prevented her (from Islam), for she was of a disbelieving people. It was said to her: "Enter As-Sarh" (a glass surface with water underneath it or a palace): but when she saw it, she thought it was a pool, and she (tucked up her clothes) uncovering her legs. (Sulaiman (Solomon)) said: "Verily, it is a Sarh (a glass surface with water underneath it or a palace)." She said: "My Lord! Verily, I have wronged myself, and I submit [in Islam, together with Sulaiman (Solomon)] to Allah, the Lord of the

`Alamin (mankind, jinn and all that exists)}. (An-Naml. 20-44)

Allah the Almighty narrates what had happened between Sulaiman and the hoopoe. All kinds of birds had pioneers or chosen ones who were charged with certain tasks and who periodically attend themselves before Sulaiman, as a habit of the troops with their kings. Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) and others mentioned that the mission of the hoopoe was to search for water in deserts and barren areas. Indeed, the hoopoe has the ability – as granted by Allah the Almighty – to see and identify the locations of underground waters. Sulaiman's hoopoe used to search for underground water and then to lead his troops thereto; they dig the land to get the water out and use it in fulfilling their needs.

One day, Sulaiman (Peace be upon him) wanted the hoopoe, he missed him and did not find him in his appointed position so, he said: {***What is the matter that I see not the hoopoe? Or is he among the absentees?***} i.e. he is not here, or I can not see him. {***I will surely punish him with a severe torment***} Sulaiman (Peace be upon him) threatened that he would punish him with some kind of penalty; {***or slaughter him, unless he brings me a clear reason***} i.e. a clear excuse that may save him from

my punishment. Allah the Almighty says: ***{But the hoopoe stayed not long}*** i.e. his absence was not so long, then ***{he (came up and) said}*** to Sulaiman (Peace be upon him) ***{I have grasped (the knowledge of a thing) which you have not grasped}*** i.e. I got to know that which you did not; ***{and I have come to you from Saba' (Sheba) with true news}***. That ***{I found a woman ruling over them: she has been given all things that could be possessed by any ruler on earth, and she has a great throne}***, he is describing the status of the kings and rulers of Sheba in the Yemen: they had a mighty and glorious kingdom along with strong and competent troops. During that period, their king died and left no heirs but a daughter whom they raised as their queen.

Ath-Tha`labi and others mentioned that after her father's death, the people appointed a man under whose rule corruption and mischief prevailed. She proposed to him in marriage and he married her. At their first night together she gave him wine till he got drunk and then she beheaded him and hanged his head on her door. Thereupon, the people raised her over the throne as their queen. She was Bilqis Bint As-Sairah. Her father was called Al-Hudhad, or Shurahil Ibn Dhi Jadan Ibn As-Sairah Ibn Al-Harith Ibn Qais Ibn Saifi Ibn Saba' Ibn Yashjub Ibn Ya`rub

Ibn Qahtan. Her father was one of the noblest kings. He refused to get married to Yemeni women. It is said that he got married to a woman from the Jinn whose name was Raihanah Bint As-Sakan who gave birth to that woman whose name is Balqamah, to be known later as Bilqis.

Ath-Tha`labi transmitted on the authority of Sa`id Ibn Bashir on the authority of Qatadah after An-Nadr Ibn Anas after Bashir Ibn Nahik, after Abu Hurairah that Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) said: *"One of Bilqis's parents was from among the Jinn."* (This is a strange Hadith in whose Chain of Transmission there is some kind of Weakness).

Ath-Tha`labi said: I was told by Abu `Abdullah Ibn Qabhunah on the authority of Abu Bakr Ibn Jarjah after Abu Bakrah as saying: *Once, Bilqis was mentioned before Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) who said: "Such people as ruled by a lady will never be successful."* (That sub-Narrator, Isma`il Ibn Muslim is Meccan and he is regarded by the Scholars of Hadith as Weak, i.e. not an authentic narrator).

It is mentioned in Sahih Al-Bukhari from the narration of `Auf on the authority of Al-Hasan, after Abu Bakra that: *When Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) was informed that the Persians had*

crowned the daughter of Khusrau as their ruler, he said, "Such people as ruled by a lady will never be successful." (Sahih Al-Bukhari)

And, his saying: ***{She has been given all things}*** that could be possessed by any ruler of the earth, ***{and she has a great throne}*** i.e. the chair she sits on was ornamented and studded with various jewels, pearls, gold and other magnificent things. Then, he mentioned their disbelief in Allah the Almighty and their worship of the sun instead of Allah and the deceivement of Satan to them by making their deeds look fair-seeming in their eyes, and barring them from Allah's Way, ***{So they do not worship (prostrate themselves before) Allah, Who brings to light what is hidden in the heavens and the earth, and knows what you conceal and what you reveal}*** i.e. He knows all secrets and revealed matters whether material or immaterial. ***{Allah, La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), the Lord of the Supreme Throne!}*** i.e. the Greatest Throne which none from among His creatures ever has.

Thereupon, Sulaiman sent the hoopoe with a letter calling them to obey Allah and His Messenger, to repent and submit themselves to his kingship and power. He sent them: ***{Be you not exalted against***

me} i.e. do not let your pride prevent you from obeying me, ***{but come to me as Muslims}*** i.e. true believers who submit to Allah with full submission. The hoopoe dropped the letter near her and waited to see what she was going to do. However, she gathered the nobles, princes and ministers to have mutual consultation, ***{She said: "O chiefs! Verily! Here is delivered to me a noble letter}***, then she first read its title ***{Verily it is from Sulaiman (Solomon)}***, then she read the rest thereof ***{and verily, it (reads): In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful: Be you not exalted against me, but come to me as Muslims (true believers who submit to Allah with full submission)}***. Then she sought their advice in a very polite manner ***{She said: O chiefs! Advise me in (this) case of mine. I decide no case till you are present with me}*** i.e. that you give me your opinions, ***{They said: We have great strength, and great ability for war}***, i.e. we can afford war and all it needs of strength, materials, etc. so if you want this choice, we are well prepared thereto ***{but it is for you to command: so think over what you will command}***, hence, they showed full obedience to her and after showing and displaying their abilities before her they left the matter in her hands to see what should be done. Verily, her opinion was wiser and better than theirs as she knew that the sender of

the letter was not to be resisted, fooled, or even deceived. ***{She said: Verily kings, when they enter a town (country), they despoil it and make the most honorable amongst its people the lowest. And thus they do}***, i.e. she explains to them that if that king overpowers this kingdom of theirs, she would be the one who receives the severest of punishment and degradation. ***{But verily! I am going to send him a present, and see with what (answer) the Messengers return}*** she wanted to bribe Sulaiman with presents and gifts knowing that Sulaiman (Peace be upon him) would not accept from them but Islam, as she and her people were disbelievers while he and his troops are far stronger than them all. For this ***{When (the messengers with the present) came to Sulaiman (Solomon), he said: Will you help me in wealth? What Allah has given me is better than that which He has given you! Nay, you rejoice in your gift!}*** Then Sulaiman (Solomon) said to the chief of her messengers who brought the present ***{Go back to them. We verily shall come to them with hosts that they cannot resist, and we shall drive them out from there in disgrace, and they will be abased}*** i.e. go back with your gifts for what I have been granted by Allah is far better than these properties, riches and presents with which you rejoice and be filled with arrogance and pride over your own people. ***{We verily shall come to them with hosts that they***

cannot resist} i.e. troops that are irresistible and cannot be defeated or encountered, and moreover we shall drive them out from their land, properties and wealth ***{in disgrace, and they will be abased}*** i.e. dragging shame, abasement and destruction.

When they heard the news, they rushed declaring their full submission and perfect obedience and willingness to accompany their queen in her leaving for meeting Sulaiman (Peace be upon him). When he (Peace be upon him) heard of their coming and their intention to present themselves before his hand, he said to those (Jinn) from among his present hosts if they would bring him her throne before she manage to come: ***{A `Ifrit (strong one) from the jinn said: I will bring it to you before you rise from your place (council). And verily, I am indeed strong, and trustworthy for such work}*** i.e. before you finish your ruling council. It was said that he used to run the affairs of the Banu Israel from the beginning of the day till the noon. ***{Verily, I am indeed strong, and trustworthy for such work}*** i.e. I am strong enough to bring the throne to you, and at the same time I am to be entrusted with what it contains of the precious jewels and pearls. But ***{One with whom was knowledge of the Scripture said}*** i.e. Asif Ibn Barkhiya who was Sulaiman's maternal cousin, said it was one of the believers from among the Jinn who

knew the Greatest Name of Allah the Almighty. It is also said that he was one from among the scholars of the Banu Israel. Moreover, it was said to be Sulaiman himself, which is very strange and odd opinion and which As-Suhaili described to be out of context. A fourth opinion held that it was Gabriel (Peace be upon him). ***{I will bring it to you within the twinkling of an eye!}*** i.e. before you send a messenger to the farthest place on earth and he comes back to you. It was also said: before the farthest person you can see reaches you; or before your sight gets weary of starring at some point and your eye closes; or before you regain your sight if you look to the farthest place your sight can reach then you close your eye, (which is the most likely interpretation). ***{Then when he [Sulaiman (Solomon)] saw it placed before him}*** i.e. when he saw the throne of Bilqis brought and placed before him, in this too short period, from the Yemen to Jerusalem, ***{he said: "This is by the Grace of my Lord - to test me whether I am grateful or ungrateful!}*** i.e. this is by the Grace of Allah I am granted and His Grace all people are granted testing them whether they are grateful or ungrateful. ***{And whoever is grateful, truly, his gratitude is for (the good of) his own self}*** i.e. the benefit of this returns onto himself, ***{and whoever is ungrateful, (he is ungrateful only for the loss of his own self.***

Certainly my Lord is Rich (Free of all needs), Bountiful} i.e. He is neither in need of thanking of the thankful, nor is He harmed by disbelief of the disbelievers.

Then, Sulaiman (Peace be upon him) ordered her throne to be altered and disguised to test her mentality and understanding, saying ***{that we may see whether she will be guided (to recognize her throne), or she will be one of those not guided. So when she came, it was said (to her): Is your throne like this? She said: (It is) as though it were the very same}***, this is due to her understanding and clear insight that she set aside the possibility that it was her own throne for she has just left it far away in the Yemen, and that she did not know that there is any who can do this marvelous act of removing it to Jerusalem.

Allah the Almighty says pertaining to Sulaiman (Peace be upon him) and his people ***{And [Sulaiman (Solomon)] said: Knowledge was bestowed on us before her, and we were submitted to Allah (in Islam as Muslims before her). And that which she used to worship besides Allah has prevented her (from Islam), for she was of a disbelieving people}*** i.e. worshipping the sun to whom she used to prostrate herself and her people instead of Allah the Almighty in follow of the religion of her fathers and

ancestors with no evidence or proof of this. Sulaiman (Peace be upon him) previously ordered a *Sarh* (a glass surface with water underneath in which there are various sorts of fish and other sea-creatures) to be built. Afterwards, Bilqis was ordered to enter the *Sarh* while Sulaiman (Peace be upon him) was sitting on his throne, ***{But when she saw it, she thought it was a pool, and she (tucked up her clothes) uncovering her legs. (Sulaiman (Solomon)) said: "Verily, it is a Sarh (a glass surface with water underneath it or a palace)." She said: "My Lord! Verily, I have wronged myself, and I submit [in Islam, together with Sulaiman (Solomon)] to Allah, the Lord of the `Alamin (mankind, jinn and all that exists)}***.

It was said: That when Sulaiman (Peace be upon him) wanted to marry her he asked mankind about a way of removing the hair from her legs, and they mentioned the razor, but she feared thereof. Then, he (Peace be upon him) consulted the Jinn who made the bath for him. Thus, he was the first to enter the bath.

At-Tha`labi and others said: When Sulaiman married her he returned the kingdom of Yemen to her and he used to visit her there and stay for three days a month then comes back to Jerusalem on the flying carpet. In addition, he ordered the Jinn to

build him three palaces in the Yemen: Ghamdan, Salhin and Bitun. And, Allah knows best!

Ibn Ishaq transmitted after some scholars on the authority of Wahb Ibn Munabih that Sulaiman (Peace be upon him) did not marry her, but he got her married to the king of Hamadan and let her ruling over the Yemen again, and he (Peace be upon him) subjected to her the king of the Jinn in Yemen to build her the aforementioned three palaces. This narration is not authenticated like the previous one, and Allah knows best!

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

(8)

The Story of Saba' (Sheba)

Allah the Almighty says:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لِسَبَإٍ فِي مَسْكَنِهِمْ آيَةٌ جَنَّتَانِ عَنْ يَمِينٍ وَشِمَالٍ كُلُوا مِنْ رِزْقِ رَبِّكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لَهُ بَلْدَةٌ طَيِّبَةٌ وَرَبٌّ غَفُورٌ(١٥)فَأَعْرَضُوا فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ سَيْلَ الْعَرِمِ وَبَدَّلْنَاهُمْ بِجَنَّتَيْهِمْ جَنَّتَيْنِ ذَوَاتَى أُكُلٍ خَمْطٍ وَأَثْلٍ وَشَيْءٍ مِنْ سِدْرٍ قَلِيلٍ(١٦)ذَلِكَ جَزَيْنَاهُمْ بِمَا كَفَرُوا وَهَلْ نُجَازِي إِلا الْكَفُورَ(١٧) وَجَعَلْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ وَبَيْنَ الْقُرَى الَّتِي بَارَكْنَا فِيهَا قُرًى ظَاهِرَةً وَقَدَّرْنَا فِيهَا السَّيْرَ سِيرُوا فِيهَا لَيَالِيَ وَأَيَّامًا آمِنِينَ(١٨) فَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا بَاعِدْ بَيْنَ أَسْفَارِنَا وَظَلَمُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ فَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ أَحَادِيثَ وَمَزَّقْنَاهُمْ كُلَّ مُمَزَّقٍ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَاتٍ لِكُلِّ صَبَّارٍ شَكُورٍ(١٩) (سبأ : ١٥-١٩)

{Indeed there was for Saba' (Sheba) a sign in their dwelling-place - two gardens on the right hand and on the left; (and it was said to them:) "Eat of the provision of your Lord, and be grateful to Him." A fair land and an Oft-Forgiving Lord! But they turned away (from the obedience of Allah), so

We sent against them Sail Al-`Arim (flood released from the dam), and We converted their two gardens into gardens producing bitter bad fruit, and tamarisks, and some few lote-trees. Like this We requited them because they were ungrateful disbelievers. And never do We requite in such a way except those who are ungrateful (disbelievers). And We placed, between them and the towns which We had blessed, towns easy to be seen, and We made the stages (of journey) between them easy (saying): "Travel in them safely both by night and day." But they said: "Our Lord! Make the stages between our journey longer," and they wronged themselves; so We made them as tales (in the land), and We dispersed them all totally. Verily, in this are indeed signs for every steadfast, grateful (person)}. (Saba', 15-19)

Scholars of genealogy – among them was Muhammad Ibn Ishaq – said: the name of Saba' is `Abd Shams Ibn Yashjub Ibn Ya`rub Ibn Qahtan. He was the first to take captives and he was very generous to the people. As-Suhaili said: it is said that he was the first person to be crowned, and some scholars said he was Muslim and that he composed poetry in which he brought good news to the advent of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him). This last saying was attributed to Ibn Didya in his book titled: [*At-Tanwir fi Maulid Al-Bashir An-Nadhir*]

Imam Ahmed said: I have been told by Abu `Abdur Rahman, after `Abdullah Ibn Luhai`ah, after `Abdullah Ibn Da`lah saying: I heard `Abdullah Ibn Al-`Abbas as saying: *A man asked Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) about Saba', whether it was a man, a woman, or a name of a land? He (Peace be upon him) said: Verily, he was a man to whom ten sons were born. Six thereof inhabited the Yemen and four Sham (Syria). Those in Yemen were: Madhhaj, Kindah, Al-Azd, Al-Ash`ariyun, Anmar and Himyar. And those who inhabited Syria were: Laghm, Judham, `Amilah and Ghassan."* The Questioner was Farwah Ibn Musaik Al-Ghatifi.

This means that the term Saba' covers all these tribes; among them also were At-Tababi`ah (Sing. Tubba`) in the Yemen. Their kings used to put crowns on as were done by kings of Persia. The Arabs used to call whomsoever rules over the Yemen and Hadramaut "Tubba`", as they used to call kings of *Sham* (Syria) and the Arab Peninsula "Caesar", and the ruler of Persia "Khusrau", the ruler of Egypt Fir`aun (Pharaoh), the ruler of Abyssinia "Negus", and the ruler of India "Ptolemes", and Bilqis was from among the Himyar kings who ruled the Yemen. They lived in happiness and easiness, with abundance of sustenance: fruits, plants, etc. and they were righteous people who

followed the Straight Path, but when they altered the Grace of Allah and denied it, they inevitably incurred to themselves and their peoples destruction and devastation.

Muhammad Ibn Ishaq narrating from Wahb Ibn Munabah said: Allah the Almighty sent them thirteen Prophets. And, As-Sadi claimed that Allah the Almighty sent them twelve thousand Prophets. Allah knows best!

The point is, when they replaced guidance with misguidance and prostrated themselves before the sun instead of Allah the Almighty, the matter which took place during the era of Bilqis and her ancestors and that which continued till Allah sent over them a flood released from the dam. Allah the Almighty explained: ***{But they turned away (from the obedience of Allah), so We sent against them Sail Al-`Arim (flood released from the dam), and We converted their two gardens into gardens producing bitter bad fruit, and tamarisks, and some few lote-trees. Like this We requited them because they were ungrateful disbelievers. And never do We requite in such a way except those who are ungrateful (disbelievers)}.***

Many scholars mentioned that the Dam of Ma'rab was built to keep water behind two great

mountains, and when the water raised, the people began to implant orchards and fruitful trees and many kinds of vegetables. It is said that the originator of the dam was Saba' Ibn Ya`rub who changed the course of seventy valleys forcing them to pour out water therein. In addition, he forced the water to get out from thirty springs or holes, but he died before completing it. So, the tribe of Himyar perfected it and it was of the space of one square league. Thereupon, they were living in happiness and abundance. Qatada and others said: the woman (from among them) would go putting a basket on her head, and it would be filled with fresh, ripe fruits, and they said that the air they breathed was so clean and pure that neither flies, nor harmful germs were found in their land. Allah the Almighty says: ***{Indeed there was for Saba' (Sheba) a sign in their dwelling-place - two gardens on the right hand and on the left; (and it was said to them:) Eat of the provision of your Lord, and be grateful to Him. A fair land and an Oft-Forgiving Lord!}*** (Saba', 15) and, ***{And (remember) when your Lord proclaimed: If you give thanks (by accepting Faith and worshipping none but Allah), I will give you more (of My Blessings); but if you are thankless (i.e. disbelievers), verily My punishment is indeed severe}.*** (Ibrahim, 7) But, when they adorned other than Allah the Almighty and arrogantly dealt with

His Grace – the stages (of journey) between them were easy in which they used to travel safely both by night and day - and asked Him to make the stages between their journeys longer and severer. Thus, they asked to turn the good into what is bad like the Children of Israel who asked Allah the Almighty to turn Manna and quails into herbs, cucumbers, *Fum* (wheat or garlic), lentils and onions. Thereupon, they were deprived that great blessing and comprehensive grace; their land was destroyed and they themselves were scattered all over the globe. Allah the Almighty says: {***But they turned away (from the obedience of Allah), so We sent against them Sail Al-`Arim (flood released from the dam)***}. Many scholars said: Allah the Almighty sent mice or rats on the bases of the dam, and when they discovered this they brought cats to eat them up, but all was in vain. The bases became very weak and finally the dam collapsed and the water drowned everything. Their good fruitful trees turned into – as explained by Allah the Almighty – bad ones: {***And We converted their two gardens into gardens producing bitter bad fruit, and tamarisks***}. And {***and some few lote-trees***} for they produce Nabk which is very few among the countless thorns they have. Allah the Almighty says: {***Like this We requited them because they were ungrateful disbelievers. And never do We requite in such a way***

***except those who are ungrateful (disbelievers)*}** i.e. We only punish - with this severe punishment - those who disbelieved in Us, belied Our Messengers, disobeyed Our Orders, and violated Our Boundaries.

Allah the Almighty says: ***{So We made them as tales (in the land), and We dispersed them all totally}*** i.e. after the destruction of their gardens, properties and land, they needed to travel and move away. Thus, they scattered in different parts of the land as some of them moved to the Hejaz, and Khuza`ah moved to Mecca. Some of them also moved to Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah, they were the first to inhabit it. Then, they were followed by three tribes from the Jews: the Banu Qainuqa`, Banu Quraizah, and Banu An-Nadir. The Jews made coalitions with the Aus and Khazraj and lived there (till the time of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him)). Some of them, moved to *Sham* (Syria) and afterwards they converted to Christianity: Ghassan, `Amilah, Bahra', Lukham, Judham, Tanukh, Taghlub, and others.

Muhammad Ibn Ishaq, in his **The Prophet's Biography** [*Kitab As-Sirah*], said that the first to quit the Yemen before the Sail Al-`Arim (the flood released from the dam) was `Amr Ibn `Amir Al-Lukhami. Lukham was the son of `Adyi Ibn Al-Harith Ibn Murrah Ibn Azd Ibn Zaid Ibn Muha` Ibn

`Amr Ibn `Uraib Ibn Yashjub Ibn Zaid Ibn Kahlan Ibn Saba'. It is said also by Ibn Hisham: Lukham Ibn `Adyi Ibn `Amr Ibn Gharib Ibn Saba'. Ibn Ishaq said: the reason behind his moving from Yemen as I was told by Abu Zaid Al-Ansari that he saw a mouse or rat digging beneath the dam of Ma'rab which was used to keep the water behind, so he realized that the dam would not stand so long, so he intended to move from the Yemen. However, he tricked his people by ordering his youngest son to slap him on the face before the people. The son did what he was ordered to and `Amr said: I would never live in a place where my youngest son slapped me on the face. And he offered his property to be sold. The noblemen of the Yemen said: seize the opportunity of `Amr's rage and buy all his property. Hence, he moved along with his children and their offspring. The Azd said: we never leave `Amr Ibn `Amir, so they sold their properties and accompanied him in his fleeing (without knowing his real intentions). They arrived at the land of `Ak who fought against them and their war had its ups and downs.

Finally, they departed from the land of `Ak and dispersed in the lands. Ibn Jafnah Ibn `Amr Ibn `Amir went to *Sham* (Syria), Al-Aus and Al-Khazraj went to Yathrib (Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah), Khuza`ah went to Marran, Azd As-Sarah went to As-Sarah, and Azd `Amman went to `Amman, then

Allah the Almighty sent the flood against the dam and it was totally collapsed. The Glorious Qur'an bears witness to this incident.

As-Sadi narrated the like and Muhammad Ibn Ishaq said that `Amr Ibn `Amir was a priest. Others said that his wife was Tarifah Bint Al-Khair Al-Himyariyah and that she was a priestess. She foretold the destruction of their country as if they saw an indication in that rat or mouse, so they did what they did, and Allah knows best! His whole story was mentioned in the Exegesis on the authority of `Ikriamh after Ibn Abu Hatim.

However, not all the people of Saba' moved from the Yemen after the collapsing of the dam, but the majority thereof stayed there. Only the people of the Dam (Ma'rab) went away and dispersed in the land. This is expressed in the Hadith mentioned earlier that was narrated by `Abdullah Ibn `Abbas, that the majority of the Yemenites did not move from the Yemen. Only four tribes quitted and six tribes stayed. They continued to live there and the ruling was kept by them and the Tababi`ah till they were deprived of their own self-ruling – for about seventy years - by the army sent by the Negus under the command of Abraha and Aryat. Then, it was regained by Saif Ibn Dhi Yazan Al-Himyari shortly before Prophet Muhammad's birth. Then, Allah's

Prophet (Peace be upon him) sent to the Yemen `Ali Ibn Abu Talib and Khalid Ibn Al-Walid, then Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari and Mu`adh Ibn Jabal to invite the people to embrace Islam. Then, Al-Aswad Al-`Ansi seized the Yemen and drove out the deputies of Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him). During the era of Abu Bakr As-Siddiq, Al-Aswad Al-`Ansi was killed and the Muslims had the upper hand in the Yemen.

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

(9)

`Uzair (Ezra)

Allah the Almighty says:

أَوْ كَالَّذِي مَرَّ عَلَى قَرْيَةٍ وَهِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلَى عُرُوشِهَا قَالَ أَنَّى يُحْيِي هَـــذِهِ اللَّهُ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا فَأَمَاتَهُ اللَّهُ مِائَةَ عَامٍ ثُمَّ بَعَثَهُ قَالَ كَمْ لَبِثْتَ قَالَ لَبِثْتُ يَوْمًــا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ قَالَ بَل لَّبِثْتَ مِائَةَ عَامٍ فَانظُرْ إِلَى طَعَامِكَ وَشَرَابِكَ لَمْ يَتَسَنَّهْ وَانظُرْ إِلَى حِمَارِكَ وَلِنَجْعَلَكَ آيَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَانظُرْ إِلَى الْعِظَامِ كَيْفَ نُنشِــزُهَا ثُمَّ نَكْسُوهَا لَحْمًا فَلَمَّا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ قَالَ أَعْلَمُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَـــيْءٍ قَدِيــرٌ (٢٥٩) (البقرة : ٢٥٩)

وَقَالَتْ الْيَهُودُ عُزَيْرٌ ابْنُ اللَّهِ وَقَالَتْ النَّصَارَى الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ اللَّـــهِ ذَلِــكَ قَوْلُهُمْ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ يُضَاهِئُونَ قَوْلَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ قَاتَلَهُمْ اللَّـــهُ أَنَّــى يُؤْفَكُونَ(٣٠) (التوبة : ٣٠)

{Or like the one who passed by a town and it had tumbled over its roofs. He said: "Oh! How will Allah ever bring it to life after its death?" So Allah caused him to die for a hundred years, then raised

him up (again). He said: "How long did you remain (dead)?" He (the man) said: "(Perhaps) I remained (dead) a day or part of a day". He said: "Nay, you have remained (dead) for a hundred years, look at your food and your drink, they show no change and look at your donkey! And thus We have made of you a sign for the people. Look at the bones, how We bring them together and clothe them with flesh". When this was clearly shown to him, he said, I know (now) that Allah is Able to do all things"}. (Al-Baqarah, 259)

And, *{And the Jews say: `Uzair (Ezra) is the son of Allah, and the Christians say: Messiah is the son of Allah. That is their saying with their mouths, resembling the saying of those who disbelieved aforetime. Allah's Curse be on them how they are deluded away from the truth!}*. (At-Taubah, 30)

Al-Hafiz Abu Al-Qasim Ibn `Asakir said: He is `Uzair Ibn Jarwah, or Ibn Suraiq Ibn `Adiya Ibn Ayyub Ibn Darzna Ibn `Ura Ibn Taqyi Ibn Usbu` Ibn Finhas Ibn El-`Azir Ibn Harun Ibn `Imran. Also, he is said to be `Uzair Ibn Srukha. Some narrations state that his grave is located in Damascus. Then, Al-Hafiz Ibn `Asakir narrated on the authority of Abu Al-Qasim Al-Baghawi after

Dawud Ibn `Amr after Hibban Ibn `Ali after Muhammad Ibn Kuraib after his father after `Abdullah Ibn `Abbas as saying: I do not know whether Tubba` was a cursed one or not? And, I do not know whether `Uzair was a Prophet or not? Then, he narrated the like from the Hadith of Mu'amil Ibn Al-Hasan on the authority of Muhammad Ibn Ishaq As-Sajizi after `Abder Razzaq after Mu`amir after Ibn Abu Dhu'aib after Sa`id Al-Maqbaari on the authority of Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him).

Then, he narrated from Ishaq Ibn Bishr – whom is rejected – after Jubair and Muqatil after Ad-Dahha, on the authority of `Abdullah Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) as saying: *`Uzair was – while a young boy - among those captivated by Bikhtinassar. When he was forty, Allah the Almighty granted him wisdom. And, none was more knowledgeable than he, pertaining to the Torah, and he was mentioned with the train of Messengers and Prophets till his name was erased by Allah the Almighty when he asked about the Divine Decree.* (This Hadith is Weak and Rejected) and Allah knows best!

Ishaq Ibn Bishr narrated after Sa`id after Abu `Urubah after Qatadah after Al-Hasan after `Abdullah Ibn Salam that `Uzair was the man whom

Allah caused to die for a hundred years, then raised him up again.

Ibn Ishaq Ibn Bishr said: I was told by Sa`id Ibn Bashir after Wahb Ibn Munabih: `Uzair was a wise, pious worshipper. One day, he went out to look after some of his properties, when he finished he passed by a ruined place where he was scorched by the blazing sun. So, he entered that ruined place riding on his donkey. He got off the donkey holding two baskets, one full of figs and the other full of grapes. He sat down and brought out a bowl in which he squeezed the grapes and soaked the dried bread he had therein. He ate thereof and then slept on his back, relying his two legs against a wall and started to gaze at the ceiling of the house. He saw some decomposed bones and said: ***{Oh! How will Allah ever bring it to life after its death?}*** He did not doubt Allah's Omnipotence to do this, but he said it in exclamation. Upon this, Allah the Almighty sent the Angel of Death who seized his soul, and thus Allah caused him to die for a hundred years. And, after one hundred years, Allah the Almighty sent to him an Angel who first created his heart to make him heedful, then, he created his two eyes to enable him to see and realize how Allah the Almighty revive the death. Then, the Angel continued to complete his creation once more while he was looking. The, he clothed his bones with flesh, skin

and hair. Then, he breathed the soul into him. All this while he is looking and perfectly heedful. The Angel asked him saying: ***{How long did you remain (dead)? He (the man) said: (Perhaps) I remained (dead) a day or part of a day}*** that he was caused to die in the afternoon and then was given life again by the end of day while the sun was still in the sky; that's why he said: ***{or part of a day}*** i.e. not even a whole day. The Angel said: ***{Nay, you have remained (dead) for a hundred years, look at your food and your drink}*** i.e. the dried bread and the squeezed grapes that did not alter or turn bad, ***{they show no change}***, and the grapes and the figs did not change as well. As if he began to deny the matter by his heart, the Angel said: do you deny what I have said? ***{and look at your donkey!}*** he looked at his donkey and found his bones to be decomposed and became totally ruined. The Angel called upon the donkey's bones and they answered his call and gathered together from all directions till he was made one whole again - while `Uzair was looking - and he clothed them with flesh, skin and hair. Then, the Angel breathed life into it and it roused erecting his ears and head towards the sky thinking the Last Hour had come. That was stated in His Saying: ***{and look at your donkey! And thus We have made of you a sign for the people. Look at the bones, how We bring them together and clothe them with***

flesh}. And *{When this was clearly shown to him, he said, I know (now) that Allah is Able to do all things}*. Then, he rode on his donkey back to his village where he seemed unfamiliar to the people and the people looked unfamiliar to him. Even, he did not find his own house easily. When he reached the house, he found a crippled blind old woman at the age of one hundred twenty years old. She was a maid owned by him in the past and he left her while she was only twenty years old. He asked her saying: is this the house of `Uzair? She said: Yes, it is. She wept and said: Today, no one ever remembers `Uzair. He told her that he was `Uzair and Allah the Almighty caused me to die for one hundred years then He gave me life again. She said: Glory is to be to Allah! We lost `Uzair one hundred years ago and never heard anything about him. He said: Verily, I am `Uzair. She said: `Uzair was a man whose supplications were acceptable by Allah the Almighty, so invoke Allah to return my sight to me to look at you, so if you were `Uzair, I would certainly know you. Consequently, he invoked Allah the Almighty, then, he wiped over her eyes and they were recovered and took her by the hand and said: Stand up by the Leave of Allah! She stood up by the Leave of Allah. She looked at him and said: I bear witness that you are `Uzair. Then, she set out for the Children of Israel in their meetings and gatherings and `Uzair's son who was about one hundred and

eighteen years old and his grandsons, and she called them saying: This is `Uzair who came back to you. They belied her, but she said: I am so and so, your maid. He invoked Allah for me and He recovered my eyesight and legs. She added: he claims that Allah caused him to die for one hundred years and then He gave him life again. The people rose up and went to look at him. His son said: my father had a black mole between his shoulders. He disclosed his shoulders and they realized that he was `Uzair. The Children of Israel said: `Uzair was the only one who committed the whole Torah to his heart and Bikhtinassar burnt it and nothing is left thereof but what the men can remember, so (if you are the true `Uzair) write it down for us. His father, Surukha buried the Torah during that era of Bikhrinassar in a place known to nobody but `Uzair. Thus, he took them to that place and brought it out, but unfortunately, the papers were rotten and ruined. Consequently, he sat under the shade of a tree circulated by the Children of Israel and he renovated the Torah for them. At that time, two stars descended from the sky and entered into his mouth whereby he remembered the whole text of the Torah and thus renovated it to the Children of Israel. Thus, ***{The Jews say: `Uzair (Ezra) is the son of Allah}.*** (At-Taubah, 30) for the matter of the two stars, renovating the Torah and charging the affairs of the Children of Israel. He renovated the Torah for them

in the land of As-Sawad. The town in which he died is said to be called "Sairabadh."

`Abdullah Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) said: Thus he was as said by Allah the Almighty: ***{And thus We have made of you a sign for the people}*** i.e. for the Children of Israel. That he was with his sons a young man among old people for he died when he was only forty and was revived on the same age and status. `Abdullah Ibn `Abbas said: he was resurrected after the time of Bikhtinassar. The same was related by Al-Hasan.

Was He a Prophet?

It is well known that `Uzair was one of the Prophets sent to the Children of Israel; he came during the interval between Dawud and Sulaiman, and Zakariya and Yahya. At his time, none from among the Children of Israel happened to memorize the Torah, Allah the Almighty inspired him to commit it to his heart and then he recited it to the Children of Israel. Wahb Ibn Munabih said: Allah the Almighty ordered an Angel to descend with light to throw on `Uzair. In doing this, he copied the Torah letter by letter till he was finished.

Ibn `Asakir narrated on the authority of `Abdullah Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with

him) that he asked `Abdullah Ibn Salam about Allah's Statement: ***{The Jews say: `Uzair (Ezra) is the son of Allah}***. (At-Taubah, 30) why did they say so? Ibn Salam mentioned his (`Uzair's) writing down of the Torah out of his memory, and the saying of the Jews that Musa (Moses) could not get them the Torah but in a book, and that `Uzair got it without a book. Thereupon, some of them said: `Uzair (Ezra) is the son of Allah. For this reason, many scholars say: there was a discontinuation pertaining to the transmission of the Torah at the time of `Uzair. This is very likely if `Uzair was not a Prophet which is adopted by `Ata' Ibn Abu Rabah and Al-Hasan Al-Basri, and that was narrated by Ishaq Ibn Bishr after Muqatil Ibn Sulaiman after `Ata' Ibn Abu Rabah as saying: that period witnessed nine things: Bikhtinassar, Sanaa garden, Saba' garden, Owners of the Ditch, Gasura, Owners of the Cave, Owners of the Elephant, Antioch, and Tubba`.

Ishaq Ibn Bishr said: I was told by Sa`id after Qatadah after Al-Hasan as saying: That period witnessed the issues of `Uzair and Bikhtinassar. Moreover, it is transmitted in the Sahih Muslim that Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) said: *"I am most akin to the son of Mary among the whole of mankind and the Prophets are of different mothers,*

but of one religion, and no Prophet was raised between me and him (Jesus Christ)."

Wahb Ibn Munabih said: He was raised between Sulaiman and `Isa (Jesus) (Peace be upon them). Ibn `Asakir narrated after Anas Ibn Malik and `Ata' Ibn As-Sa'ib as saying: `Uzair was raised during the time of Musa Ibn `Imran, and that he asked for permission to meet with Musa (Peace be upon him), but he refused because of his asking about the Divine Decree. He left while saying: to die a hundred times, is easier than tasting the humiliation for an hour.

As for what was narrated by Ibn `Asakir and others on the authority of Ibn `Abbas, Nuf Al-Bakali, Sufyan Ath-Thawri and others that he asked about the Divine Decree and consequently his name was erased from among the names of the Prophets. It is a rejected and unauthentic Hadith that it is likely to be copied from the tales and stories that were invented by the Israelites.

Narrated `Abdul Razzaq and Qutaibah Ibn Sa`id after Ja`far Ibn Sulaiman after Abu `Imran Al-Juni after Nuf Al-Bakali as saying: `Uzair said to his Lord: O Lord! You fashioned the creation, and You mislead whom You will and guide whom You will. It was thus said to him: Turn away from this! But, he returned back. It was again said to him: Turn

away from this or your name as a Prophet would be wiped out; I am not to be questioned about My Doing, while they (all creatures) are brought into account pertaining to what they do.

The Group, all but At-Tirmidhi, narrated from the Hadith of Yunus Ibn Yazid after Az-Zuhri after Sa`id and Abu Salamah after Abu Hurairah; also it was narrated by Shu`aib after Abu Az-Zinad after Al-A`raj after Abu Hurairah as saying: Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) said: *"An ant had bitten a Prophet (one amongst the earlier Prophets) and he ordered that the colony of the ants should be burnt. And Allah revealed to him: Because of an ant's bite you have burnt a community from amongst the communities which sings My glory".* This Prophet was narrated to be `Uzair by Ishaq Ibn Bishr after Ibn Juraij after Muhammad Ibn `Abdel Wahhab Ibn Mujahid after his father; also this was narrated on the authority of `Abdullah Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) and Al-Hasan Al-Basri. Allah knows best!

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

(10)

Dhul Qarnain

Allah the Almighty says:

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنْ ذِي الْقَرْنَيْنِ قُلْ سَأَتْلُو عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْهُ ذِكْرًا(٨٣)إِنَّا مَكَّنَّا لَهُ
فِي الأَرْضِ وَآتَيْنَاهُ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ سَبَبًا(٨٤)فَأَتْبَعَ سَبَبًا(٨٥)حَتَّى إِذَا بَلَغَ
مَغْرِبَ الشَّمْسِ وَجَدَهَا تَغْرُبُ فِي عَيْنٍ حَمِئَةٍ وَوَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا قَوْمًا قُلْنَا يَا ذَا
الْقَرْنَيْنِ إِمَّا أَنْ تُعَذِّبَ وَإِمَّا أَنْ تَتَّخِذَ فِيهِمْ حُسْنًا(٨٦)قَالَ أَمَّا مَنْ ظَلَمَ
فَسَوْفَ نُعَذِّبُهُ ثُمَّ يُرَدُّ إِلَى رَبِّهِ فَيُعَذِّبُهُ عَذَابًا نُكْرًا(٨٧) وَأَمَّا مَنْ آمَنَ
وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَهُ جَزَاءً الْحُسْنَى وَسَنَقُولُ لَهُ مِنْ أَمْرِنَا يُسْرًا(٨٨)ثُمَّ
أَتْبَعَ سَبَبًا(٨٩)حَتَّى إِذَا بَلَغَ مَطْلِعَ الشَّمْسِ وَجَدَهَا تَطْلُعُ عَلَى قَوْمٍ لَمْ
نَجْعَلْ لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِهَا سِتْرًا(٩٠)كَذَلِكَ وَقَدْ أَحَطْنَا بِمَا لَدَيْهِ خُبْرًا(٩١)ثُمَّ
أَتْبَعَ سَبَبًا(٩٢)حَتَّى إِذَا بَلَغَ بَيْنَ السَّدَّيْنِ وَجَدَ مِنْ دُونِهِمَا قَوْمًا لا يَكَادُونَ
يَفْقَهُونَ قَوْلاً(٩٣) قَالُوا يَا ذَا الْقَرْنَيْنِ إِنَّ يَأْجُوجَ وَمَأْجُوجَ مُفْسِدُونَ فِي
الأَرْضِ فَهَلْ نَجْعَلُ لَكَ خَرْجًا عَلَى أَنْ تَجْعَلَ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَهُمْ سَدًّا(٩٤)قَالَ مَا
مَكَّنِّي فِيهِ رَبِّي خَيْرٌ فَأَعِينُونِي بِقُوَّةٍ أَجْعَلْ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ رَدْمًا(٩٥)آتُونِي
زُبَرَ الْحَدِيدِ حَتَّى إِذَا سَاوَى بَيْنَ الصَّدَفَيْنِ قَالَ انفُخُوا حَتَّى إِذَا جَعَلَهُ نَارًا
قَالَ آتُونِي أُفْرِغْ عَلَيْهِ قِطْرًا(٩٦)فَمَا اسْتَطَاعُوا أَنْ يَظْهَرُوهُ وَمَا اسْتَطَاعُوا

لَهُ نَقْبًا(٩٧) قَالَ هَذَا رَحْمَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّي فَإِذَا جَاءَ وَعْدُ رَبِّي جَعَلَهُ دَكَّاءَ وَكَانَ وَعْدُ رَبِّي حَقًّا(٩٨) (الكهف : ٨٣-٩٨)

{And they ask you about Dhul-Qarnain. Say: "I shall recite to you something of his story." Verily, We established him in the earth, and We gave him the means of everything. So he followed a way. Until, when he reached the setting place of the sun, he found it setting in a spring of black muddy (or hot) water. And he found near it a people. We (Allah) said (by inspiration): "O Dhul-Qarnain! Either you punish them, or treat them with kindness." He said: "As for him (a disbeliever in the Oneness of Allah) who does wrong, we shall punish him, and then he will be brought back unto his Lord, Who will punish him with a terrible torment (Hell). "But as for him who believes (in Allah's Oneness) and works righteousness he shall have the best reward, (Paradise), and we (Dhul-Qarnain) shall speak unto him mild words (as instructions)." Then he followed another way. Until, when he came to the rising place of the sun, he found it rising on a people for whom We (Allah) had provided no shelter against the sun. So (it was)! And We knew all about him (Dhul-Qarnain). Then he followed (another) way. Until, when he reached between two mountains, he found, before

(near) them (those two mountains), a people who scarcely understood a word. They said: "O Dhul-Qarnain! Verily Ya'juj and Ma'juj (Gog and Magog) are doing great mischief in the land. Shall we then pay you a tribute in order that you might erect a barrier between us and them?" He said: "That (wealth, authority and power) in which my Lord had established me is better (than your tribute). So help me with strength (of men), I will erect between you and them a barrier. "Give me pieces (blocks) of iron;" then, when he had filled up the gap between the two mountain-cliffs, he said: "Blow;" then when he had made them (red as) fire, he said: "Bring me molten copper to pour over them." So they (Ya'juj and Ma'juj (Gog and Magog)] could not scale it or dig through it. Dhul-Qarnain) said: "This is a mercy from my Lord, but when the Promise of my Lord comes, He shall level it down to the ground. And the Promise of my Lord is ever true."}. (Al-Kahf, 83-98)

Was He a Prophet?

Allah the Almighty praised Dhul-Qarnain in the Glorious Qur'an for his justice. He ruled over the easts and wests and many regions where he subjected their peoples and ruled them with perfect justice. The most likely opinion is that he was just a king.

Also, he was said to be a Prophet, or a Messenger. However, the most unlikely opinion thereof was that he was an Angel. The latter was narrated after the Leader of the Faithful, `Umar Ibn Al-Khattab (May Allah be pleased with him) who heard a man calling another saying: O Dhul-Qarnain! He (`Umar) said: Shut up! Was it not enough with you to name yourselves after the Prophets, that you take names after those of the Angels?"

It is reported that `Abdullah Ibn `Amr said: *Dhul-Qarnain was a Prophet*. Conversely, Abu Hurairah narrated that Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) said: *"I do not know whether Tubba` was a cursed one or not? And, I do not know whether Hudud (the Prescribed Penalties) are expiatory for their people or not? And, I do not know whether Dhul-Qarnain was a Prophet or not?"* (This Hadith is Odd and Strange)

In other narration, Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) transmitted a report that goes to the saying that Dhul-Qarnain was a good king whose work was praised in Allah's Book (the Glorious Qur'an); he was made victorious; and Al-Khadir was his minister, leader of his army, and his consultant.

Al-Azraqi and others mentioned that Dhul-Qarnain embraced Islam at the hands of Ibrahim

(Abraham) (Peace be upon him) and that he circumambulated around the Ka`bah with him and his son, Isma`il (Peace be upon them). Also, it was narrated after `Ubaid Ibn `Umair and his son, `Abdullah and others: that Dhul-Qarnain set out on foot to perform Pilgrimage. Upon hearing this, Ibrahim (Peace be upon him) welcomed him and invoked Allah for his sake and gave him advice as well. In addition, Allah the Almighty subjugated for Dhul-Qarnain the clouds to carry him wherever he wished. Allah knows best!

Why was he called "Dhul-Qarnain" (i.e. Owner of the two horns)?

This is a controversial issue, that there is not a definite known reason behind this. Some said: he had something on his head that looked like two horns. Wahb Ibn Munabih said: He had two horns of brass on his head. (This interpretation is very weak)

Some scholars from among the People of the Book (Christians and Jews) said: This is because he ruled over Persian and Roman territories. It was also said: that he reached the first ray of the rising sun on the east and that on the west and he ruled over all that was in between. (The latter opinion is more likely true, which is the saying of Az-Zuhari)

Al-Hasan Al-Basri said: He had two braids of hair that he used to fold up and thus was called "Dhul-Qarnain". And, Ishaq Ibn Bishr narrated that the grandfather of `Umar Ibn Shu`aib said: Dhul-Qarnain, once, invited a tyrant king to the way of Allah. The king hit him on the head and broke one of his horns. Dhul-Qarnain invited him again and the tyrant broke the second horn. Thus, he was called "Dhul-Qarnain".

Narrated Ath-Thawri that `Ali Ibn Abu Talib (May Allah be pleased with him) was once asked about Dhul-Qarnain. He replied saying: He was a rightly-guided and pious man. He invited his people to Allah, but they hit him on his horn (side of the head) and he was killed. Allah the Almighty resurrected him and he invited them again, again they hit him on his second horn and he was killed (for the second time). Allah the Almighty revived him and thus he was called "Dhul-Qarnain". In other narrations, it was narrated by Abu At-Tufail after `Ali Ibn Abu Talib that he said: He was neither a Prophet, nor a Messenger, nor an Angel, but was a godly, pious worshipper.

What's his Name?

Scholars disagreed regarding his name. Az-Zubair Ibn Bakkar narrated after `Abdullah Ibn

`Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him): His name was `Abdullah Ibn Ad-Dahhak Ibn Ma`d; or Mus`ab Ibn `Abdullah Ibn Qinan Ibn Mansur Ibn `Abdullah Ibn Al-Azd Ibn Ghauth Ibn Nabt Ibn Malik Ibn Zaid Ibn Kahlan Ibn Saba' Ibn Qahtan.

It has been narrated in a Hadith that he was from the tribe of Himyar and that his mother was Roman, and he was called the Philosopher for the excellence of his mentality. However, As-Suhaili said: his name was Marzaban Ibn Marzabah. This was mentioned by Ibn Hisham who mentioned in another location that his name was: As-Sa`b Ibn Dhi Mara'id who was the grandfather of the Tababi`ah and it was him who gave the verdict to the benefit of Ibrahim (Peace be upon him) pertaining to the well of As-Sab`.

It was said: He was Afridun Ibn Asfiyan who killed Ad-Dahhak. Al-Qass Ibn Sa`idah Al-Iyadi said in his famous sermon: O folk of Ayad Ibn As-Sa`b! Dhul-Qarnain ruled over the west and east, subjugated the Jinn and mankind, and he lived for two thousand years. However, all this was just like a twinkle of the eye.

Ad-Daraqutni and Ibn Makula mentioned that his name was Hirmis, or Hirwis Ibn Qitun Ibn Rumi Ibn Lanti Ibn Kashaukhin Ibn Yunan Ibn Yafith Ibn Nuh (Noah (Peace be upon him)), and Allah knows best!

Ishaq Ibn Bishr narrated after Sa`id Ibn Bashir on the authority of Qatadah as saying: Alexander was (called) Dhul-Qarnain, his father was the first Caesar, and he was from among the offspring of Sam Ibn Nuh (Noah (Peace be upon him)).

At this conjecture one should distinguish between two people who were called Dhul-Qarnain. The first is our pious Dhul-Qarnain while the second is Alexander Ibn Philips Ibn Masrim Ibn Hirmis Ibn Maitun Ibn Rumi Ibn Lanti Ibn Yunan Ibn Yafith Ibn Yunah Ibn Sharkhun Ibn Rumah Ibn Sharfat Ibn Tufil Ibn Rumi Ibn Al-Asfar Ibn Yaqz Ibn Al-`Iis Ibn Ishaq Ibn Ibrahim (Peace be upon him). This lineage was stated by Al-Hafiz Ibn `Asakir in his *Tarikh* (History). Moreover, he was the Macedonian, Greek, Egyptian leader who established Alexandria and basing on whom the Romans set their Calendar. He came after the first Dhul-Qarnain with a very long time. This was three hundred years before Jesus (Peace be upon him). His minister was the famous Philosopher Artatalis. Moreover, he was the one who killed Dara Ibn Dara, and subjugated the Persian kings and seized their lands. We only drew the reader's attention to this because many people think that the two men called "Dhul-Qarnain" are one, which is a big mistake for there were great differences between both. The first was a godly, pious, righteous worshipper of Allah the Almighty,

and he was a just king whose minister was the pious man, Al-Khadir. Moreover, some scholars stated that he was a Prophet as well. Whereas, the latter was a polytheist whose minister was a philosopher as mentioned earlier. In addition, the time elapsed between them both was more than two thousand years. Hence, none can miss the great differences and variance between both of them but an ignorant idiot who know nothing at all!

Allah's Saying: ***{And they ask you about Dhul-Qarnain}*** was revealed because the people of Quraish asked the Jews of something about which they would ask the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) to test his knowledge. The Jews told them: Ask him about a man who traveled through the earth, and about some young men who set out and no one knew what happened to them? Thereupon, Allah the Almighty revealed the stories of the Owners of the Cave and that of Dhul-Qarnain. Thus, He said: ***{Say: I shall recite to you something of his story}***, i.e. enough and sufficient news about him and his status. Then, He said: ***{Verily, We established him in the earth, and We gave him the means of everything}***, i.e. Allah the Almighty expanded his kingdom and provided him with what might enable him to gain what he wished to. Narrated Qutaibah that `Ali Ibn Abu Talib was once asked about Dhul-Qarnain: how could he reach the

east and west? `Ali replied: The clouds were subjugated for him, the means (of everything) were provided to him, and he was given extension pertaining to the light. `Ali added: Do you want me to go on? The man became silent and thereupon, `Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) became silent.

Narrated Abu Ishaq As-Subai`i after `Amr Ibn `Abdullah Al-Wada`i: "I heard Mu`awiyah as saying: four persons ruled over the earth: Sulaiman Ibn Dawud the Prophet (Peace be upon them), Dhul-Qarnain, a man from the people of Hulwan, and another man. Someone said: was it Al-Khadir? Mu`awiyah said: No."

Az-Zubair Ibn Bakkar narrated that Sufyan Ath-Thawri said: I have come to know that four persons ruled over the whole earth: two of them were believers and the other two were disbelievers. The believing two were: Prophet Sulaiman and Dhul-Qarnain. And, the disbelieving two were: Namrud and Bikhtinassar." The same was narrated by Sa`id Ibn Bashir.

Narrated Ishaq Ibn Bishr after Sa`id Ibn Abu `Urubah after Qatadah after Al-Hasan as saying: "Dhul-Qarnain was a king after Namrud. He was a pious, righteous Muslim who traveled through the east and west. Allah the Almighty prolonged his life

and granted him victory over the enemies and to get hold of their properties. He conquered the land, subjugated the people and traveled through the earth till he reached the east and west. Allah the Almighty says: ***{And they ask you about Dhul-Qarnain. Say: "I shall recite to you something of his story." Verily, We established him in the earth, and We gave him the means of everything}***, i.e. knowledge of seeking the means of fulfilling things. Ibn Ishaq said: Muqatil claimed that he used to conquer the lands and collect treasures, and used to offer the people two choices: whether they embrace his religion and follow him, or they be killed.

Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Sa`id Ibn Jubair, `Ikrimah, `Ubaid Ibn Ya`la, As-Sadyi, Qatadah and Ad-Dahhak said: ***{and We gave him the means of everything}***, i.e. knowledge. Qatadah and Matar Al-Warraq said: This means landmarks, locations, milestones and traces of the land. `Abdur Rahman Ibn Zaid Ibn Aslam said: this means languages as he used not to conquer a people but he first speaks with them in their own language. The most possible and true explanation is that he knew all means through which he could fulfill his need or desire. As he used to take from every conquered region the provisions that enabled him to seize the next region, and so on.

Some scholars from among the People of the Book (Christians and Jews) mentioned that he spent one thousand and six hundred years traveling through the land inviting people to the worship of Allah the Almighty Who has no partner in His Dominion. But, it seems that there is some exaggeration in specifying that lengthy period, and Allah knows best!

Allah's Statement ***{So he followed a way. Until, when he reached the setting place of the sun}*** i.e. he reached the place that no one can ever overpass, and he stood on the edge of the western ocean called Oqyanus wherein the islands called *Al-Khalidat* "The Eternal Ones". There, he could watch the setting of the sun. ***{He found it setting in a spring of black muddy (or hot) water}***, i.e. the sea or ocean, as one who stands ashore sees the sun as if it rises from and sets in the sea. For this he said ***{he found it}***, i.e. as he thought.

Imam Ahmed narrated after Yazid Ibn Harun after Al-`Awwam Ibn Haushab as saying: I was told by a freed-slave of `Abdullah Ibn `Amr after `Abdullah as saying: *Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) looked at the sun when it sat and said: "In Allah's blazing fire. Were it not for its prevention by Allah's Command, it would burn all that is on*

earth." (This Hadith is very Strange and Odd and surely it is not an Authentic one)

Dhul-Qarnain is Seeking the Eye of Life:

Ibn `Asakir reported a lengthy narration in which: Dhul-Qarnain had a friend from among the Angels called Ranaqil. Dhul-Qarnain asked him: Do you know the place on earth called "the Eye of Life"? The Angel described to him its location. Dhul-Qarnain set out seeking it appointing Al-Khadir as his harbinger. Al-Khadir came upon it in the land of darkness and he drank thereof. But, Dhul-Qarnain did not make it. However, Dhul-Qarnain met with a group of Angels in a palace there and he was given a stone. When he returned to his army, he asked the scholars who put it on a scale and put on the other one thousand stones of the like (weight and shape). However, the scale containing the first stone tilted. He, then, asked Al-Khadir who put on the other scale a single stone and a handful of dry dust. Al-Khadir's scale tilted this time. He then commented saying: "This is like the son of Adam, he is never satisfied till he is buried (covered with dust)". Thereupon, the scholars prostrated themselves before him as a sign of respect and honor; and Allah knows best!

Then, Allah the Almighty informs us that Dhul-Qarnain gave verdicts pertaining to the people of that region ***{We (Allah) said (by inspiration): "O Dhul-Qarnain! Either you punish them, or treat them with kindness." He said: "As for him (a disbeliever in the Oneness of Allah) who does wrong, we shall punish him, and then he will be brought back unto his Lord, Who will punish him with a terrible torment (Hell)}*** i.e. he tastes the torment in this present life and in the Hereafter. He began with the torment of the present life for its more difficult in the sight of the disbeliever. ***{But as for him who believes (in Allah's Oneness) and works righteousness he shall have the best reward, (Paradise), and we (Dhul-Qarnain) shall speak unto him mild words (as instructions)}*** where he started with the reward of the Hereafter which is most important and he added thereto kindness, i.e. justice, knowledge and faith. Allah the Almighty says ***{Then he followed another way}***, i.e. he followed a way to return back from the west to the east. Some say that it took him twelve years to return to the east. ***{Until, when he came to the rising place of the sun, he found it rising on a people for whom We (Allah) had provided no shelter against the sun}***, i.e. they do not have houses or any shelters to save them from the blazing sun. Some scholars say: they used to resort to trenches dug in the earth to shelter then

from the burning rays of the sun. Then, Allah the Almighty says: ***{So (it was)! And We knew all about him (Dhul-Qarnain)}***, i.e. Allah knows all about his affairs; He preserves and keeps him during his travels through the land from the west to the east and vice versa.

It was narrated after `Ubaid Ibn `Umair, his son `Abdullah and others that Dhul-Qarnain performed Pilgrimage on foot. Upon hearing that, Ibrahim (Peace be upon him) met him and on their meeting he invoked Allah for his sake, and advised him. It was said also that he was brought a horse to ride, but he said: I do not ride (on the back of horses) in a land wherein Prophet Ibrahim (Peace be upon him). Hence, Allah the Almighty subjugated for him the clouds, and Ibrahim (Peace be upon him) gave him the glad tidings pertaining to this. The clouds used to carry him anywhere he wished for. Allah the Almighty says: ***{then, he followed (another) way. Until, when he reached between two mountains, he found, before (near) them (those two mountains), a people who scarcely understood a word}***, i.e. they were ignorant. It was said that they were the *Turk*,[1] cousins of Gog and Magog. However, they told him

[1] These are not the inhabitants of Turkey. (Translator)

that Gog and Magog wronged them and practiced mischief in their land. They offered him a tribute for that he builds a barrier (dam) preventing them from raiding over them. He refused to take the tribute they offered him finding sufficiency in that which Allah the Almighty has given him, so ***{He said: "That (wealth, authority and power) in which my Lord had established me is better (than your tribute)}***. Then, he asked them to bring him men and tools to erect the barrier between them. Gog and Magog could only reach them from that place located between two mountain-cliffs. The other paths were either vast seas, or high mountains. Consequently, he erected it using iron and molten copper: he put iron instead of bricks and molten copper instead of clay. Allah the Almighty commented, ***{So they (Gog and Magog) could not scale it}*** with escalators, ***{or dig through it}*** with axes or picks. ***{(Dhul-Qarnain) said: "This is a mercy from my Lord}*** i.e. Allah the Almighty decreed this to be a mercy from Him to His slaves that they no longer assaulted by Gog and Magog. ***{But when the Promise of my Lord comes}*** i.e. the time He decided for them (Gog and Magog) to demolish it and get out attacking mankind near the Last Hour, ***{He shall level it down to the ground}*** this will inevitably take place. As He says ***{And the Promise of my Lord is ever true}***, and ***{Until, when Gog and Magog are let loose (from their barrier),***

and they swoop down from every mound. And the true promise (Day of Resurrection) shall draw near (of fulfillment). Then (when mankind is resurrected from their graves), you shall see the eyes of the disbelievers fixedly staring in horror. (They will say): Woe to us! We were indeed heedless of this - nay, but we were Zalimun (polytheists and wrong-doers)}. (Al-Anbiya', 96, 97) Allah the Almighty says: ***{We shall leave them to surge like waves on one another}*** i.e. on the day Gog and Magog will come out, ***{and the Trumpet will be blown, and We shall collect them (the creatures) all together}***.

Narrated Abu Dawud At-Tyalisi after Ath-Thawri saying: I have been informed that the first human being to shake hands (with someone else) was Dhul-Qarnain. Moreover, it was narrated on the authority of Ka`b Al-Ahbar that he said to Mu`awiyah: Dhul-Qarnain on his death-bed told his mother, after his death, to prepare food and gather the women of the city and invite them to eat save anyone who lost any of her children (she should not eat thereof). The mother did as she asked, and none of them stretched a hand towards the food. She said: Glory be to Allah! Did you all lost children? They answered: By Allah! Yes we did. And, this was a great condolence for her.

Ishaq mentioned after Bishr Ibn `Abdullah Ibn Ziyad after some of the People of the Book (Christians and Jews) the will of Dhul-Qarnain, an eloquent and lengthy advice, and that he died at the age of three thousand years. (This is very odd and strange)

Ibn `Asakir said: I was informed that he lived for about thirty-six years. Others said: he lived for thirty-two years and that he came seven hundred and forty years after Dawud (David) (Peace be upon him). He came after Adam (Peace be upon him) with five thousand and one hundred eighty-one years and that his reign lasted for sixteen years. But, that which he related is true as for the Macedonian Alexander and not our Dhul-Qarnain. He thus mixed the former with the latter and this is perfectly wrong.

Among those who mixed them and declared both to be just one, was Imam `Abdul Malik Ibn Hisham (Narrator of the Prophet's Biography), which was denied and rejected by Al-Hafiz Abu Al-Qasim As-Suhaili. He severely refuted his sayings and set clear boundaries between the two persons as mentioned earlier. He said: May be some of the former kings called themselves "Dhul-Qarnain" following the example of the first true one; and Allah knows best!

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

(11)

Gog and Magog

Allah the Almighty says:

قَالُوا يَاذَا الْقَرْنَيْنِ إِنَّ يَأْجُوجَ وَمَأْجُوجَ مُفْسِدُونَ فِي الأَرْضِ فَهَلْ نَجْعَلُ لَكَ خَرْجًا عَلَى أَنْ تَجْعَلَ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَهُمْ سَدًّا(٩٤)قَالَ مَا مَكَّنِّي فِيهِ رَبِّي خَيْرٌ فَأَعِينُونِي بِقُوَّةٍ أَجْعَلْ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ رَدْمًا(٩٥)آتُونِي زُبَرَ الْحَدِيدِ حَتَّى إِذَا سَاوَى بَيْنَ الصَّدَفَيْنِ قَالَ انفُخُوا حَتَّى إِذَا جَعَلَهُ نَارًا قَالَ آتُونِي أُفْرِغْ عَلَيْهِ قِطْرًا(٩٦)فَمَا اسْتَطَاعُوا أَنْ يَظْهَرُوهُ وَمَا اسْتَطَاعُوا لَهُ نَقْبًا(٩٧) قَالَ هَذَا رَحْمَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّي فَإِذَا جَاءَ وَعْدُ رَبِّي جَعَلَهُ دَكَّاءَ وَكَانَ وَعْدُ رَبِّي حَقًّا (٩٨) (الكهف : ٩٤-٩٨)

حَتَّى إِذَا فُتِحَتْ يَأْجُوجُ وَمَأْجُوجُ وَهُمْ مِنْ كُلِّ حَدَبٍ يَنسِلُونَ(٩٦) (الأنبياء : ٩٦)

{They said: "O Dhul-Qarnain! Verily Ya'juj and Ma'juj (Gog and Magog) are doing great mischief in the land. Shall we then pay you a tribute in order that you might erect a barrier

between us and them?" He said: "That (wealth, authority and power) in which my Lord had established me is better (than your tribute). So help me with strength (of men), I will erect between you and them a barrier. "Give me pieces (blocks) of iron;" then, when he had filled up the gap between the two mountain-cliffs, he said: "Blow;" then when he had made them (red as) fire, he said: "Bring me molten copper to pour over them." So they (Ya'juj and Ma'juj (Gog and Magog)] could not scale it or dig through it. (Dhul-Qarnain) said: "This is a mercy from my Lord, but when the Promise of my Lord comes, He shall level it down to the ground. And the Promise of my Lord is ever true"}. (Al-Kahf, 94-98)

And, ***{Until, when Ya'juj and Ma'juj (Gog and Magog) are let loose (from their barrier), and they swoop down from every mound}.*** (Al-Anbiya', 96)

No doubt, Gog and Magog are from among the children of Adam (Peace be upon him). In proof of this, comes the Hadith that is transmitted in the two *Sahihs* (Bukhari and Muslim) from Al-A`mash, after Abu Salih, after Abu Sa`id Al-Khudri who narrated the Prophet (Peace be upon him) to have said: *"Allah will say (on the Day of Resurrection), 'O Adam!' Adam will reply, 'Labbaik wa Sa`daik, and all the*

good is in Your Hand.' Allah will say: 'Bring out the people of the fire.' Adam will say: 'O Allah! How many are the people of the Fire?' Allah will reply: 'From every one thousand, take out nine-hundred-and ninety-nine.' At that time children will become hoary headed, every pregnant female will have a miscarriage, and one will see mankind as drunken, yet they will not be drunken, but dreadful will be the Wrath of Allah." The Companions of the Prophet (Peace be upon him) asked, "O Allah's Messenger! Who is that (excepted) one?" He said, "Rejoice with glad tidings; one person will be from you and one-thousand will be from Gog and Magog." The Prophet (Peace be upon him) further said, "By Him in Whose Hands my life is, hope that you will be one-fourth of the people of Paradise." We shouted, "Allahu Akbar!" He added, "I hope that you will be one-third of the people of Paradise." We shouted, "Allahu Akbar!" He said, "I hope that you will be half of the people of Paradise." We shouted, "Allahu Akbar!" He further said, "You (Muslims) (compared with non Muslims) are like a black hair in the skin of a white ox or like a white hair in the skin of a black ox (i.e. your number is very small as compared with theirs)." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

This Hadith denotes the numerousness of their numbers and that they are a hundred-fold the number of all mankind. Moreover, they are from among the

offspring of Nuh (Noah (Peace be upon him)) in particular for Allah the Almighty informs us in His Glorious Qur'an that Nuh (Peace be upon him) invoked Him against the people of the earth saying: ***{And Nuh (Noah) said: "My Lord! Leave not one of the disbelievers on the earth!}*** (Nuh, 26) And, Allah the Almighty Himself says: ***{Then We saved him and those with him in the ship}***. (Al-`Ankabut, 15) And, ***{And, his progeny, them We made the survivors}***. (As-Saffat, 77) This is in addition to the Hadith transmitted in Imam Ahmed's *Musnad* and the *Sunan* of Abu Dawud that mentioned: that there were three sons born to Nuh (Peace be upon him): Shem, Ham and Japheth. Shem was the father of the Arabs; Ham was the father of the Sudan; and Japheth was the father of the *Turk*[1]. Moreover, Gog and Magog are just a part of the *Turk* from among the Mangols who were stronger and spread mischief in the land. Some people claimed that Gog and Magog were created out of the semen of Adam (Peace be upon him) that mixed with the earth and thus they were not from Eve. But, this claim - which was held by Sheik Abu Zakariya An-Nawawi in his explanation of *Sahih* Muslim and by other scholars who declared it to be weak and strange – is too weak. As, there is not any proof on this and

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[1] The '*Turk*' here does not mean those of Turkey. (Translator)

moreover, it contradicts the obvious text of the Glorious Qur'an - mentioned earlier - that all mankind of today are from the offspring of Nuh (Peace be upon him). In addition, some people claimed that they (Gog and Magog) are of different shapes and figures: some are as tall as palm-trees, some are too short, and some take one of their ears as a bed and the other as a cover or blanket. However, all these claims are groundless and cannot stand the slightest refutation. But, the correct view is that: they are from among the children of Adam (Peace be upon him) and that they bear the same qualities and shapes. Allah's Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: *"Allah created Adam, making him 60 cubits tall. When He created him, He said to him, "Go and greet that group of angels, and listen to their reply, for it will be your greeting (salutation) and the greeting (salutations of your offspring." So, Adam said (to the angels), As-Salamu `Alaikum (i.e. Peace be upon you). The angels said, "As-Salamu `Alaika wa Rahmatu-l-lahi" (i.e. Peace and Allah's Mercy be upon you). Thus the angels added to Adam's salutation the expression, 'Wa Rahmatu-l-lah,'. Any person who will enter Paradise will resemble Adam (in appearance and figure). People have been decreasing in stature since Adam's creation."* This Hadith blocks the

way before those who falsely claim things that are groundless.

A Very Important Question:

If it is said: How does the previously-mentioned Hadith – that was agreed upon – denote that they will be treated as ransom for the Believers on the Day of Resurrection and that they will enter Hell-fire, while no Messengers were sent to them and Allah the Almighty says: ***{And We never punish until We have sent a Messenger (to give warning)}*** (Al-Isra', 15)?

The answer is that: They will never be punished until they are given warning. Thereupon, if they were existing before the time of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) and Messengers were sent to them, thus, they were given warning. And, if no Messengers were sent to them, they would be treated as "*People of the Fitrah*" and those to whom the Message of Islam did not reach or be conveyed. However, it is indicated by the Hadith transmitted by some of the Companions of the Prophet (Peace be upon him) that he said: *"Those and the like will be tested on the pathways of the Resurrection: and whoever responds to the caller, he will enter Paradise. And, whoever refuses, he will enter the Fire."* However, testing them neither necessitates

their salvation, nor contradicts with the saying that they will enter Hell-fire. For Allah the Almighty reveals to His Prophet (Peace be upon him) what He wills of the Unseen, and hence, He informed him that they will be from among the people of Hell and that their nature denies the truth and submission thereto, as they do not respond to the caller till the Day of Judgment. This indicates that, they would be more stubborn in rejecting the truth if they were to come to know it in this present life. In the pathways of Resurrection, some of those who used to belie the truth in the present life will submit themselves to the truth. Almighty Allah says: ***{And if you only could see when the Mujrimun (criminals, disbelievers, polytheists, sinners) shall hang their heads before their Lord (saying): "Our Lord! We have now seen and heard, so send us back (to the world), that we will do righteous good deeds. Verily! We now believe with certainty"}***. (As-Sajdah, 12) However, the Prophetic Hadith indicating that the Prophet (Peace be upon him) invited them on the Night Journey to embrace Islam and they refused, this Hadith is an invented and fabricated one. The one who fabricated it was the liar, `Amr Ibn As-Subh.

The (Dam) Barrier:

It was mentioned earlier that Dhul-Qarnain has built it out of iron and copper and elevated it to a

very high point that is equal to the very lofty mountains. However, there is no on earth an equal building in terms of loftiness or benefiting to mankind. Imam Al-Bukhari transmitted in his *Sahih* the following Hadith saying: *"A man told the Prophet (Peace be upon him) that he had seen the dam (of Gog and Magog). The Prophet (Peace be upon him) asked: 'How did you find it?' the man said: 'I found it like Al-Burd Al-Muhabbar (stripped garments).' The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: 'You have seen it like that.'"* In Ibn Jarir's exegesis of the Qur'an, a slight different narration was reported by Qatadah who said: *"I was told that a man said: 'O Allah's Messenger! I have seen the dam of Gog and Magog.' The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: 'describe it to me.' The man said: 'It looked like stripped garments, with red and black stripes.' The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: 'You have seen it.'"*

It was mentioned that the Caliph, Al-Wathiq sent some messengers with messages to different kings to allow them travelling from one country to another till they reach the dam and stand on its reality. When they came back to the Caliph, they described it to him saying that it has a huge door with many locks. It is a very high and tight building and that the remnants of its building materials and tools are kept there in a tower. Also, there are still guards keeping

an eye on it. They added that its location is on the northern-east side of the earth. It was also said that their land is very spacious and that they live on farming and hunting and that their numbers are countless.

How can we compromise between the Qur'anic Verse that reads: ***{So they (Ya'juj and Ma'juj (Gog and Magog)] could not scale it or dig through it}***. (Al-Kahf, 97) and the Prophetic Hadith that is transmitted by Imam Al-Bukhari and Imam Muslim on the authority of Mother of the Believers, Zainab Bint Jahsh (May Allah be pleased with her) as saying: *That the Prophet (Peace be upon him) once came to her in a state of fear and said: "None has the right to be worshipped but Allah. Woe unto the Arabs from a danger that has come near. An opening has been made in the wall of Gog and Magog like this," making a circle with his thumb and index finger. Zainab Bint Jahsh said: "O Allah's Messenger! Shall we be destroyed even though there are pious persons among us?" He said: "Yes, when the evil persons will increase."* And in another narration: *The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: "Allah has made an opening in the wall of the Gog and Magog (people) like this, and he made with his hand (with the help of his fingers)."* (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

The answer is that: this means one of two things: the first is that this is an indication of the opening of gates of evil and turmoil and hence, this is a mere example set for us. The second view considers this as narrating a concrete matter for His Statement, ***{So they (Ya'juj and Ma'juj (Gog and Magog)] could not scale it or dig through it},*** i.e. at their time for the sentence is in the past tense, the matter which does not contradict the possibility of its taking place in the future with the Permission of Allah the Almighty. But, as for the other Hadith that is narrated by Imam Ahmed in his *Musnad* that the Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: *"Verily, Gog and Magog dig through the dam every day, till they could see the sun rays (through it), their leader would say: 'Go back and you will finish it tomorrow.' On the next day, they find it as strong as before. Till when their appointed term comes and Allah desires to send them against mankind, they dig it till they could see the sun rays (through it) and their leader says: 'Go back and you will finish it tomorrow, if Allah wills!' On the next day, they find it as they had left the day before and they dig through it and come against mankind. They will drink (every drop of water they pass by). The people will resort to strongholds. And, Gog and Magog will throw their arrows towards the sky. When they come back to them stained with what looks like blood, they will say: 'we have defeated the people on earth and those in heaven as well.' Then,*

Allah the Almighty sends against them worms in their necks that kill them all. Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) said: 'By Whom in Whose Hand Muhammed's soul rests! Living creatures of the earth would go fat and be thankful due to eating their flesh and (drinking their) blood.'" Imam Ahmed transmitted it also on the authority of Hasan Ibn Musa after Sufyan after Qatadah. At-Tirmidhi transmitted the same Hadith on the authority of Abu `Awanah after Qatadah, then he said: it is a Strange Hadith that reached us from none but this Chain of Transmission.

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

(12)

People of the Cave

Allah the Almighty says:

أَمْ حَسِبْتَ أَنَّ أَصْحَابَ الْكَهْفِ وَالرَّقِيمِ كَانُوا مِنْ آيَاتِنَا عَجَبًا(٩)إِذْ
أَوَى الْفِتْيَةُ إِلَى الْكَهْفِ فَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا آتِنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً وَهَيِّئْ لَنَا مِنْ أَمْرِنَا
رَشَدًا(١٠)فَضَرَبْنَا عَلَى آذَانِهِمْ فِي الْكَهْفِ سِنِينَ عَدَدًا(١١)ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَاهُمْ
لِنَعْلَمَ أَيُّ الْحِزْبَيْنِ أَحْصَى لِمَا لَبِثُوا أَمَدًا(١٢)نَحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ نَبَأَهُمْ
بِالْحَقِّ إِنَّهُمْ فِتْيَةٌ آمَنُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ وَزِدْنَاهُمْ هُدًى(١٣) وَرَبَطْنَا عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ إِذْ
قَامُوا فَقَالُوا رَبُّنَا رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ لَنْ نَدْعُوَ مِنْ دُونِهِ إِلَهًا لَقَدْ قُلْنَا
إِذًا شَطَطًا(١٤)هَؤُلاءِ قَوْمُنَا اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ آلِهَةً لَوْلا يَأْتُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ
بِسُلْطَانٍ بَيِّنٍ فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا(١٥)وَإِذْ اعْتَزَلْتُمُوهُمْ
وَمَا يَعْبُدُونَ إِلا اللَّهَ فَأْوُوا إِلَى الْكَهْفِ يَنشُرْ لَكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ مِنْ رَحْمَتِهِ وَيُهَيِّئْ
لَكُمْ مِنْ أَمْرِكُمْ مِرفَقًا(١٦) وَتَرَى الشَّمْسَ إِذَا طَلَعَتْ تَزَاوَرُ عَنْ كَهْفِهِمْ
ذَاتَ الْيَمِينِ وَإِذَا غَرَبَتْ تَقْرِضُهُمْ ذَاتَ الشِّمَالِ وَهُمْ فِي فَجْوَةٍ مِنْهُ ذَلِكَ
مِنْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ مَنْ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِي وَمَنْ يُضْلِلْ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ وَلِيًّا
مُرْشِدًا(١٧)وَتَحْسَبُهُمْ أَيْقَاظًا وَهُمْ رُقُودٌ وَنُقَلِّبُهُمْ ذَاتَ الْيَمِينِ وَذَاتَ
الشِّمَالِ وَكَلْبُهُمْ بَاسِطٌ ذِرَاعَيْهِ بِالْوَصِيدِ لَوْ اطَّلَعْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ لَوَلَّيْتَ مِنْهُمْ

فِرَارًا وَلَمُلِئْتَ مِنْهُمْ رُعْبًا(١٨) وَكَذَلِكَ بَعَثْنَاهُمْ لِيَتَسَاءَلُوا بَيْنَهُمْ قَالَ قَائِلٌ مِنْهُمْ كَمْ لَبِثْتُمْ قَالُوا لَبِثْنَا يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ قَالُوا رَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا لَبِثْتُمْ فَابْعَثُوا أَحَدَكُمْ بِوَرِقِكُمْ هَذِهِ إِلَى الْمَدِينَةِ فَلْيَنظُرْ أَيُّهَا أَزْكَى طَعَامًا فَلْيَأْتِكُمْ بِرِزْقٍ مِنْهُ وَلْيَتَلَطَّفْ وَلا يُشْعِرَنَّ بِكُمْ أَحَدًا(١٩)إِنَّهُمْ إِنْ يَظْهَرُوا عَلَيْكُمْ يَرْجُمُوكُمْ أَوْ يُعِيدُوكُمْ فِي مِلَّتِهِمْ وَلَنْ تُفْلِحُوا إِذًا أَبَدًا(٢٠) وَكَذَلِكَ أَعْثَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ لِيَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَأَنَّ السَّاعَةَ لا رَيْبَ فِيهَا إِذْ يَتَنَازَعُونَ بَيْنَهُمْ أَمْرَهُمْ فَقَالُوا ابْنُوا عَلَيْهِمْ بُنْيَانًا رَبُّهُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِهِمْ قَالَ الَّذِينَ غَلَبُوا عَلَى أَمْرِهِمْ لَنَتَّخِذَنَّ عَلَيْهِمْ مَسْجِدًا(٢١) سَيَقُولُونَ ثَلاثَةٌ رَابِعُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ وَيَقُولُونَ خَمْسَةٌ سَادِسُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ رَجْمًا بِالْغَيْبِ وَيَقُولُونَ سَبْعَةٌ وَثَامِنُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ قُلْ رَبِّي أَعْلَمُ بِعِدَّتِهِمْ مَا يَعْلَمُهُمْ إِلا قَلِيلٌ فَلا تُمَارِ فِيهِمْ إِلا مِرَاءً ظَاهِرًا وَلا تَسْتَفْتِ فِيهِمْ مِنْهُمْ أَحَدًا(٢٢)وَلا تَقُولَنَّ لِشَيْءٍ إِنِّي فَاعِلٌ ذَلِكَ غَدًا(٢٣)إِلا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ وَاذْكُرْ رَبَّكَ إِذَا نَسِيتَ وَقُلْ عَسَى أَنْ يَهْدِيَنِي رَبِّي لأَقْرَبَ مِنْ هَذَا رَشَدًا(٢٤)وَلَبِثُوا فِي كَهْفِهِمْ ثَلاثَ مِائَةٍ سِنِينَ وَازْدَادُوا تِسْعًا(٢٥) قُلْ اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا لَبِثُوا لَهُ غَيْبُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ أَبْصِرْ بِهِ وَأَسْمِعْ مَا لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلا يُشْرِكُ فِي حُكْمِهِ أَحَدًا(٢٦) (الكهف : ٩-٢٦)

{Do you think that the people of the Cave and the Inscription (the news or the names of the people of the Cave) were a wonder among Our Signs? (Remember) when the young men fled for refuge

(from their disbelieving folk) to the Cave. They said: "Our Lord! Bestow on us mercy from Yourself, and facilitate for us our affair in the right way!" Therefore, We covered up their (sense of) hearing (causing them to go in deep sleep) in the Cave for a number of years. Then We raised them up (from their sleep), that We might test which of the two parties was best at calculating the time period that they had tarried. We narrate unto you (O Muhammad (Peace be upon him)) their story with truth: Truly they were young men who believed in their Lord (Allah), and We increased them in guidance. And We made their hearts firm and strong (with the light of Faith in Allah and bestowed upon them patience to bear the separation of their kith and kin and dwellings.) when they stood up and said: "Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth, never shall we call upon any Ilah (god) other than Him; if we did, we should indeed have uttered an enormity in disbelief. "These our people have taken for worship alihah (gods) other than Him (Allah). Why do they not bring for them a clear authority? And who does more wrong than he who invents a lie against Allah. (The young men said to one another): "And when you withdraw from them, and that which they worship, except Allah, then seek refuge in the Cave; your Lord will open a way for you from His

Mercy and will make easy for you your affair (i.e. will give you what you will need of provision, dwelling)." And you might have seen the sun, when it rose, declining to the right from their Cave, and when it set, turning away from them to the left, while they lay in the midst of the Cave. That is (one) of the Ayat (proofs, evidences, signs) of Allah. He whom Allah guides, he is the rightly guided; but he whom He sends astray, for him you will find no Wali (guiding friend) to lead him (to the Right Path). And you would have thought them awake, whereas they were asleep. And We turned them on their right and on their left sides, and their dog stretching forth his two forelegs at the entrance [of the Cave or in the space near to the entrance of the Cave (as a guard at the gate)]. Had you looked at them, you would certainly have turned back from them in flight, and would certainly have been filled with awe of them. Likewise, We awakened them (from their long deep sleep) that they might question one another. A speaker from among them said: "How long have you stayed (here)?" They said: "We have stayed (perhaps) a day or part of a day." They said: "Your Lord (Alone) knows best how long you have stayed (here). So send one of you with this silver coin of yours to the town, and let him find out which is the good lawful food, and bring some of that to you. And let him be careful

and let no man know of you. "For, if they come to know of you, they will stone you (to death or abuse and harm you) or turn you back to their religion; and in that case you will never be successful." And thus We made their case known (to the people), that they might know that the Promise of Allah is true, and that there can be no doubt about the Hour. (Remember) when they (the people of the city) disputed among themselves about their case, they said: "Construct a building over them; their Lord knows best about them;" (then) those who won their point said (most probably the disbelievers): "We verily shall build a place of worship over them." (Some) say they were three, the dog being the fourth among them; and (others) say they were five, the dog being the sixth, guessing at the unseen; (yet others) say they were seven, and the dog being the eighth. Say (O Muhammad (Peace be upon him)): "My Lord knows best their number; none knows them but a few." So debate not (about their number) except with the clear proof (which We have revealed to you). And consult not any of them (people of the Scripture - Jews and Christians) about (the affair of) the people of the Cave. And never say of anything, "I shall do such and such thing tomorrow." Except (with the saying), "if Allah will!" And remember your Lord when you forget and say: "It may be that my Lord guides me

unto a nearer way of truth than this." And they stayed in their Cave three hundred (solar) years, adding nine (for lunar years). Say: "Allah knows best how long they stayed. With Him is (the knowledge of) the Unseen of the heavens and the earth. How clearly He sees, and hears (everything)! They have no Wali (Helper, Disposer of affairs, Protector) other than Him, and He makes none to share in His Decision and His Rule." (Al-Kahf, 9-26)

The reason behind the revelation of these verses and those relating the story of Dhul-Qarnain was cited by Muhammad Ibn Ishaq in his biography of the Prophet: that the people of Quraish sent to the Jews asking them for things to test the Prophet (Peace be upon him) with. The Jews said: ask him about a group of people who disappeared in the past and none has any knowledge about them; about a man who traveled through the land; and about *Ar-Ruh* (the Spirit). Thereupon, Almighty Allah revealed His Statement, *{And they ask you (O Muhammad (Peace be upon him)) concerning the Ruh (the Spirit); Say: "The Ruh (the Spirit) is one of the things, the knowledge of which is only with my Lord. And of knowledge, you (mankind) have been given only a little"}* (Al-Isra', 85) and, *{And they ask you about Dhul-Qarnain. Say (O Muhammad (Peace be upon him)): "I shall recite to*

you something of his story"} (Al-Kahf, 83) and here He says: ***{Do you think that the people of the Cave and "Ar-Raqim" the Inscription (the news or the names of the people of the Cave) were a wonder among Our Signs?}***, i.e. they are not more amazing than what We have given you of the great news, astonishing signs and gigantic wonders. However, a cave is a hole in the mountain. Mentioned Shu`aib Al-Jiba'i: their cave was called "Haizam". As for "*Ar-Raqim*", Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) said: I do not know what it means! Some scholars such as Ibn Jarir and others said: it is the record where their news and names are written thereafter. It was also said: it is the name of the mountain their cave was in. However, many other things were said pertaining to this, but the knowledge thereof rests only with Allah the Almighty Who knows the best! Shu`aib Al-Jiba'i said: their dog was called "*Himran*".

The fact that the Jews knew about them nullifies the claim of some interpreters that they were after Jesus (Peace be upon him) and that they were Christians. However, it is clear that their people were idol-worshippers. Many interpreters and historians said that they lived during the lifetime of a king called "Diqyanus" and that they were sons of some nobles or kings. They met on a feast day and saw the rituals their people were performing in

worship of the idols. At this very moment, Allah removed the veils from their hearts and they realized that their people were wrong-doers. Consequently, they deserted the religion of their people and resorted to the worship of Allah Alone. It is also said: that each one of them when guided by Allah to the True Religion, abandoned his people and they coincidentally gathered in one place. Imam Muslim transmitted in his *Sahih* the following Prophetic Hadith which supports that meaning: *"Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) as saying: Souls are troops collected together and those who familiarized with each other (in the heaven from where these come) would have affinity, with one another (in the world) and those amongst them who opposed each other (in the Heaven) would also be divergent (in the world)."* That, they asked one another about their affair and hence, they agreed on deserting and abandoning their people and fleeing with their true religion. Allah the Almighty says: ***{We narrate unto you (O Muhammad (Peace be upon him)) their story with truth: Truly they were young men who believed in their Lord (Allah), and We increased them in guidance. And We made their hearts firm and strong (with the light of Faith in Allah and bestowed upon them patience to bear the separation of their kith and kin and dwellings.) when they stood up and said: "Our Lord is the Lord of the***

heavens and the earth, never shall we call upon any Ilah (god) other than Him; if we did, we should indeed have uttered an enormity in disbelief. "These our people have taken for worship alihah (gods) other than Him (Allah). Why do they not bring for them a clear authority? And who does more wrong than he who invents a lie against Allah}. (Al-Kahf, 13-15) "Clear authority" here means obvious evidence or proof. ***{And who does more wrong than he who invents a lie against Allah. (The young men said to one another): "And when you withdraw from them, and that which they worship, except Allah,}*** (Al-Kahf, 15, 16) i.e. when you deserted them and their idols that they used to worship others instead of Allah the Almighty. Our Prophet Ibrahim (Peace be upon him) said: ***{And (remember) when Ibrahim (Abraham) said to his father and his people: "Verily, I am innocent of what you worship, except Him (i.e. Allah Alone I worship none) Who did create me; and verily He will guide me"}***. (Az-Zukhruf, 26, 27) Thus, some of these young men said: as you did desert your people's religion, you should also desert them in body and figure so as to be safe from the possibility that their evil may touches you, ***{then seek refuge in the Cave; your Lord will open a way for you from His Mercy and will make easy for you your affair (i.e. will give you what you will need of provision,***

dwelling)}, (Al-Kahf, 16) i.e. Allah will draw on you His cover, protect you and reward you with the best of all rewards. Then, Allah described the cave to which they resorted stating that its door is to the north saying: ***{And you might have seen the sun, when it rose, declining to the right from their Cave, and when it set, turning away from them to the left}***, i.e. the sun rises on the western side of their cave, then it declines to the right side thereof. And, when it sets its rays come towards the cave from its eastern side. Here, the wisdom is that the sun enters their cave on its rising and setting in order to refresh the air from time to time. ***{While they lay in the midst of the Cave. That is (one) of the Ayat (proofs, evidences, signs) of Allah}***, i.e. their stay on this state for a very long period of time without eating and drinking is one of the Signs of Allah and a proof of His Magnificent Ability. ***{He whom Allah guides, he is the rightly guided; but he whom He sends astray, for him you will find no Wali (guiding friend) to lead him (to the Right Path). And you would have thought them awake, whereas they were asleep}***, for their eyes were open in order to be kept sound. ***{And We turned them on their right and on their left sides}***, it was said: they used to be turned from one side to the other once every year. However, the number of the turnings is known only to Allah the Almighty Who knows best!

Allah the Almighty says: ***{And their dog stretching forth his two forelegs at the entrance [of the Cave or in the space near to the entrance of the Cave (as a guard at the gate)]}***, i.e. their dog which accompanied them when they abandoned their people did not enter the cave with them, instead, it stayed at the entrance stretching forth his two forelegs thereat. This is for it was highly disciplined and also as a sign of honor to them because the angels do not enter a house in which there is a dog. Thus, the dog was blessed because he was in their company. However, many tales and narrations were invented with regard to the dog's name and color.

Scholars differed on the location of this cave. Some of them said: It is in the land of *Aylah* (i.e. Jerusalem). Others said: It is in the land of Ninawa. And others said: it is in the *Sham* (Syrian territories) which is more proper and Allah knows best![1] After Allah the Almighty gave us perfect and complete description of them and made us as seeing them, He

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[1] On the sixties, an archeologist called Muhammad Tayseer Zabyan discovered a cave in Jordan, six miles away from Amman, in a region called "Ar-Rajeeb" whose description goes with that which is mentioned in the verses. The great scholar, Abu Al-A`la Al-Maududi visited it and agreed with many scholars who viewed the same opinion. And, I myself visited it in 1986. (Majdi M. Ash-Shahawi)

said: ***{Had you looked at them, you would certainly have turned back from them in flight, and would certainly have been filled with awe of them}***, i.e. because of the dignity and loftiness of their appearance. The addressed her is not only Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) but also all mankind because it is a human nature to feel awe when seeing a magnificent or dignified thing. Then, Allah the Almighty awakened them (from their long deep sleep) after three-hundred and nine years; then a speaker from among them said: ***{"How long have you stayed (here)?" They said: "We have stayed (perhaps) a day or part of a day." They said: "Your Lord (Alone) knows best how long you have stayed (here). So send one of you with this silver coin of yours to the town}*** the coins they had were called "Dafsus". ***{And let him find out which is the good lawful food, and bring some of that to you}***, i.e. to eat thereof. This is a sign of their piety and god-fearing. ***{And let him be careful}*** during entering that town ***{and let no man know of you. For, if they come to know of you, they will stone you (to death or abuse and harm you) or turn you back to their religion; and in that case you will never be successful}***, i.e. if you turn back to their religion after you are saved by Allah the Almighty. All this because they thought they slept a day or part of a day, and they did not imagine to have slept for more

than three-hundred years. The period in which almost everything have changed and their generation passed away and other generations inhabited the land. Thus, when one of them went to the town to get the food, he feared that the people would recognize him, so he disguised. Instead, the town and its people found him to be a stranger and feared that he might be a spy or that he could harm them in any way. Some scholars said that he escaped from them. But, others said: he informed them with the news and took them to the cave to see his companions. When they approached the cave, he entered it and told his companions all about the period they spent sleeping in the cave and they confessed it to be the Divine Decree of Allah the Almighty. It was said: They went on sleeping; and others said: They all fell dead.

As for the people of the city, it was said that they could not see their place in the cave. Or, they could not enter the cave because of their cowardice, or feeling their lofty dignity. However, they (the people of the city) disputed among themselves about their case, some of them said: ***{Construct a building over them}***, i.e. block the cave's gate to prevent them from getting out or anyone from touching them with harm. But, those who won their point said: ***{We verily shall build a place of worship over them}*** that will be blessed because its nearness to these

righteous and godly people. This was common in the previous eras and periods prior to Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him). But, Islam rejects this deed (building places of worship over the graves of anyone even if it is a Prophet): *the Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: "May Allah curse the Jews and Christians for they built the places of worship at the graves of their Prophets."* The Prophet (Peace be upon him) was warning (Muslims) against what the previous nations used to do with the graves of their pious people.

Allah the Almighty says: ***{And thus We made their case known (to the people), that they might know that the Promise of Allah is true, and that there can be no doubt about the Hour}***, i.e. to let the people know that resurrection is true and that there can be no doubt about the Hour if they know that these young men slept for more than three-hundred years then they were awaken unchanged. So, He Who kept them in this state all that period, is capable to resurrect and give life again to the dead bodies after they undergo decomposition. Really, the believers do not doubt this in the least: ***{Verily, His Command, when He intends a thing, is only that He says to it, 'Be!" - and it is!}***. (Ya-Sin, 82)

Then, He says: ***{(Some) say they were three, the dog being the fourth among them; and (others) say***

they were five, the dog being the sixth, guessing at the unseen; (yet others) say they were seven, and the dog being the eighth}, as Allah cited the dispute of the people among themselves as to their number. He cited three sayings, the first two He refuted and the third He stated, a matter which indicates that the third is the true one. However, Allah guided His Prophet (Peace be upon him) to the good manners to be followed in such a case: that one should say *"Allah knows best!"*. For this, Allah the Almighty says: ***{My Lord knows best their number}***.

His Statement: ***{None knows them but a few}***, from among the people. ***{So debate not (about their number) except with the clear proof (which We have revealed to you)}***, i.e. an easy debate and do not exert yourself in such matters. ***{And consult not any of them (people of the Scripture - Jews and Christians) about (the affair of) the people of the Cave}***, as He concealed their number from the very beginning of the story, saying: ***{Truly they were young men who believed in their Lord (Allah)}***. (Al-Kahf, 13) So, if there was any benefit in mentioning their number, Allah the Almighty would certainly revealed it to us from the very beginning!

Allah the Almighty says: ***{And never say of anything, "I shall do such and such thing***

tomorrow." Except (with the saying), "if Allah will!" And remember your Lord when you forget and say: "It may be that my Lord guides me unto a nearer way of truth than this"}, this is a great and high moral lesson taught by Allah the Almighty that when anyone wishes to do something, he should say "If Allah wills", because man cannot know what is hidden with Allah for tomorrow or for the future. Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported Allah's Prophet (Peace be upon him) as saying that *"Sulaiman Ibn Dawud, the Messenger of Allah, observed: I will have an intercourse with seventy wives during the night; all of them will give birth to a male child who will fight in the cause of Allah. His companion or the angels said to him: Say, "If Allah wills." But he (Sulaiman) did not say so, and he forgot it. And none of his wives gave birth to a child, but one who gave birth to a premature child. Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) said: Had he said Insha' Allah (if Allah so willed), he would not have failed and his desire would have been materialized."*

Allah the Almighty says: ***{And remember your Lord when you forget}***, for forgetting may be caused by the Devil, and remembering Allah gets the Devil out of one's heart and thus he remembers what he has forgotten. ***{And say: "It may be that my Lord guides me unto a nearer way of truth than this"},***

i.e. if there were controversies and disputes about something, one should resort to Allah Who can facilitate it and make it so easy. Then, Allah the Almighty says: ***{And they stayed in their Cave three hundred (solar) years, adding nine}***, i.e. for lunar years. ***{Say: Allah knows best how long they stayed},*** i.e. if you are asked about this and you do not know exactly the answer, you should only attribute the matter to Allah the Almighty ***{With Him is (the knowledge of) the Unseen of the heavens and the earth}***, i.e. He knows the Unseen and gives knowledge thereof to none but Whom He wishes from among His creatures; ***{How clearly He sees, and hears (everything)!}***, i.e. He puts everything in its proper place with His Perfect Knowledge and Justice. Then, He says: ***{They have no Wali (Helper, Disposer of affairs, Protector) other than Him, and He makes none to share in His Decision and His Rule}***, i.e. He is the only Disposer of affairs and He is the King Who rules over everything.

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

(13)

The Believer & The Disbeliever

Allah the Almighty says:

وَاضْرِبْ لَهُمْ مَثَلاً رَجُلَيْنِ جَعَلْنَا لأحَدِهِمَا جَنَّتَيْنِ مِنْ أَعْنَابٍ وَحَفَفْنَاهُمَا بِنَخْلٍ وَجَعَلْنَا بَيْنَهُمَا زَرْعًا(٣٢)كِلْتَا الْجَنَّتَيْنِ آتَتْ أُكُلَهَا وَلَمْ تَظْلِمْ مِنْهُ شَيْئًا وَفَجَّرْنَا خِلالَهُمَا نَهَرًا(٣٣)وَكَانَ لَهُ ثَمَرٌ فَقَالَ لِصَاحِبِهِ وَهُوَ يُحَاوِرُهُ أَنَا أَكْثَرُ مِنْكَ مَالاً وَأَعَزُّ نَفَرًا(٣٤)وَدَخَلَ جَنَّتَهُ وَهُوَ ظَالِمٌ لِنَفْسِهِ قَالَ مَا أَظُنُّ أَنْ تَبِيدَ هَذِهِ أَبَدًا(٣٥)وَمَا أَظُنُّ السَّاعَةَ قَائِمَةً وَلَئِنْ رُدِدْتُ إِلَى رَبِّي لأَجِدَنَّ خَيْرًا مِنْهَا مُنْقَلَبًا(٣٦) قَالَ لَهُ صَاحِبُهُ وَهُوَ يُحَاوِرُهُ أَكَفَرْتَ بِالَّذِي خَلَقَكَ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ سَوَّاكَ رَجُلاً(٣٧)لَكِنَّا هُوَ اللَّهُ رَبِّي وَلا أُشْرِكُ بِرَبِّي أَحَدًا(٣٨)وَلَوْلا إِذْ دَخَلْتَ جَنَّتَكَ قُلْتَ مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ لا قُوَّةَ إِلا بِاللَّهِ إِنْ تُرَنِي أَنَا أَقَلَّ مِنْكَ مَالاً وَوَلَدًا(٣٩)فَعَسَى رَبِّي أَنْ يُؤْتِيَنِي خَيْرًا مِنْ جَنَّتِكَ وَيُرْسِلَ عَلَيْهَا حُسْبَانًا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فَتُصْبِحَ صَعِيدًا زَلَقًا(٤٠)أَوْ يُصْبِحَ مَاؤُهَا غَوْرًا فَلَنْ تَسْتَطِيعَ لَهُ طَلَبًا(٤١)وَأُحِيطَ بِثَمَرِهِ فَأَصْبَحَ يُقَلِّبُ كَفَّيْهِ عَلَى مَا أَنفَقَ فِيهَا وَهِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلَى عُرُوشِهَا وَيَقُولُ يَالَيْتَنِي لَمْ أُشْرِكْ بِرَبِّي أَحَدًا(٤٢)وَلَمْ تَكُنْ لَهُ فِئَةٌ يَنصُرُونَهُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَمَا كَانَ مُنْتَصِرًا(٤٣)هُنَالِكَ الْوَلايَةُ لِلَّهِ الْحَقِّ هُوَ خَيْرٌ ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ عُقْبًا(٤٤) (الكهف : ٣٢-٤٤)

{And put forward to them the example of two men: unto one of them We had given two gardens of grapes, and We had surrounded both with date-palms; and had put between them green crops (cultivated fields). Each of those two gardens brought forth its produce, and failed not in the least therein, and We caused a river to gush forth in the midst of them. And he had property (or fruit) and he said to his companion, in the course of mutual talk: "I am more than you in wealth and stronger in respect of men." And he went into his garden while in a state (of pride and disbelief), unjust to himself. He said: "I think not that this will ever perish. And I think not the Hour will ever come, and if indeed I am brought back to my Lord, (on the Day of Resurrection), I surely shall find better than this when I return to Him." His companion said to him during the talk with him: "Do you disbelieve in Him Who created you out of dust (i.e. your father Adam), then out of Nutfah (mixed semen drops of male and female discharge), then fashioned you into a man? "But as for my part, (I believe) that He is Allah, my Lord, and none shall I associate as partner with my Lord. "It was better for you to say, when you entered your garden: 'That which Allah wills (will come to pass)! There is no power but with Allah!' If you see me less than you in wealth, and children. "It may be that my

Lord will give me something better than your garden and will send on it Husban (torment, bolt) from the sky, then it will be a slippery earth. "Or the water thereof (of the gardens) becomes deep-sunken (underground) so that you will never be able to seek it." So his fruits were encircled (with ruin). And he remained clapping his hands (with sorrow) over what he had spent upon it, while it was all destroyed on its trellises, and he could only say: "Would that I had ascribed no partners to my Lord!" And he had no group of men to help him against Allah, nor could he defend (or save) himself. There (on the Day of Resurrection), Al-Walayah (protection, power, authority and kingdom) will be for Allah (Alone), the True God. He (Allah) is the Best for reward and the Best for the final end. (La ilaha illallah - none has the right to be worshipped but Allah)}. (Al-Kahf, 32-44)

Some scholars said: This is a mere example that has not necessarily taken place in real life. But, the majority of scholars hold that it really took place and happened in this present life of ours. His Statement, ***{And put forward to them the example}***, i.e. for the polytheists of Quraish as they wear pride and show arrogance to the weak and poor. This is like Allah's Statement that reads, ***{And put forward to them a similitude: the (story of the) dwellers of the town, [it***

is said that the town was Antioch (Antakiya)], when there came Messengers to them}. (Ya-Sin, 13) It is well-known that one of these two men was a believer, while the other was a disbeliever. It is also said that each one of them was very rich. The believer spent all his riches and wealth in the Cause of Allah. Conversely, the disbeliever, though granted gardens and orchards (of which are the two gardens mentioned in the Glorious Qur'an in full details), He diverted from Allah's Path. His two gardens contained grapes and date-palms surrounding his plants and grapes, along with overflowing rivers and water streams running everywhere along with his property. The fruits of his trees and plants were numerous and countless (only by Allah's Grace), and the sight of his gardens was very pleasant. However, the owner of the two gardens became proud and dealt arrogantly with the believing man saying: ***{I am more than you in wealth and stronger in respect of men}***, i.e. I am better than you as you spent all your wealth in vain and you did not do as I did: buying gardens and orchards and investing the money therein to gain the profits later. You should have followed my very steps! And, ***{he went into his garden while in a state (of pride and disbelief), unjust to himself}***, i.e. in a state that is not pleasing to Allah the Almighty (with pride and arrogance). And he ***{said: I think not that this will ever perish}***, that is

because there is plenty of its plants and trees and if any of these were to perish, he would certainly (as he thought) get it replaced with a better and more fine one. For – he thought – he has everything: plentiful water, countless fruits, and varieties of plants.

Then, the disbeliever said: ***{And I think not the Hour will ever come}***, as he put his perfect trust in the vain pleasures of this life of ours and belied the existence of the everlasting Hereafter. Then, he said: ***{and if indeed I am brought back to my Lord, (on the Day of Resurrection), I surely shall find better than this when I return to Him}***, i.e. if there is indeed a Hereafter and a Last Day, he will find there better than what he has been given in the present life. As he was deceived by what he was given and thought that Allah the Almighty granted him all these blessings because He loves him and favors him to other people. The same was said by Al-`As Ibn Wa'il in His Saying: ***{Have you seen him who disbelieved in Our Ayat (this Qur'an and Muhammad (Peace be upon him) and said: "I shall certainly be given wealth and children [if I will be alive (again)]." Has he known the Unseen or has he taken a covenant from the Most Gracious (Allah)?}*** (Maryam, 77, 78). And, Almighty Allah says pertaining to the one He granted with blessings,

{And truly, if We give him a taste of mercy from Us, after some adversity (severe poverty or disease, etc.) has touched him, he is sure to say: "This is due to my (merit); I think not that the Hour will be established. But if I am brought back to my Lord, surely, here will be for me the best (wealth) with Him"} (Fussilat, 50) and, ***{Then, We verily, will show to the disbelievers what they have done, and We shall make them taste a severe torment}*** (Fussilate, 50), and Qarun (Korah) said, ***{This has been given to me only because of the knowledge I possess}***. (Al-Qasas, 78) i.e. for Allah knows that I deserve it. But, Allah the Almighty says: ***{Did he not know that Allah had destroyed before him generations, men who were stronger than him in might and greater in the amount (of riches) they had collected? But the Mujrimun (criminals, disbelievers, polytheists, sinners) will not be questioned of their sins (because Allah knows them well, so they will be punished without being called to account)}***. (Al-Qasas, 78) And, Allah the Almighty says: ***{And it is not your wealth, nor your children that bring you nearer to Us (i.e. please Allah), but only he who believes (in the Islamic Monotheism), and does righteous deeds (will please Us); as for such, there will be twofold reward for what they did, and they will reside in the high dwellings (Paradise) in peace and security}*** (Saba',

37) and, ***{Do they think that in wealth and children with which We enlarge them. We hasten unto them with good things. Nay, [it is a Fitnah (trial) in this worldly life so that they will have no share of good things in the Hereafter] but they perceive not}***. (Al-Mu'minun, 55, 56)

When this ignorant was deluded by what he has been given in this present life, he denied the Hereafter and claimed that if it is to be there, he would find that which is better than what he was first given. When his companion (the believing man) heard him saying so, he said to him ***{during the talk with him}***, i.e. during their debate. ***{Do you disbelieve in Him Who created you out of dust (i.e. your father Adam), then out of Nutfah (mixed semen drops of male and female discharge), then fashioned you into a man?}***, i.e. do you disbelieve in the Day of Resurrection while you know that He, Allah, is Him Who created you out of dust, then out of Nutfah, then fashioned you in stages till you became a sound and well-erected man with hearing, sight, understanding and organs you transgress with! Then, how could you deny the Resurrection while you know that Allah is capable of creating you out of nothingness. ***{But as for my part, (I believe) that He is Allah, my Lord}***, i.e. I believe in other than what you believe in or even think of. As ***{(I believe) that***

He is Allah, my Lord, and none shall I associate as partner with my Lord}, i.e. I do not worship other than Him and I believe in that He will resurrect the dead and gather the scattered and rotten bones together, and I know that there is no partner with Allah in His Dominion or creation, and that there is no god but Him.

Then, he guided him towards what should have been said upon entering the garden saying: ***{It was better for you to say, when you entered your garden: 'That which Allah wills (will come to pass)! There is no power but with Allah!'}***, for this, it is better for anyone who becomes admirer of any of his wealth, household, children or status, he should say these words: (That which Allah wills (will come to pass)! There is no power but with Allah!).

Then, the believer said to the disbeliever: ***{If you see me less than you in wealth, and children. It may be that my Lord will give me something better than your garden}***, i.e. in the Hereafter. ***{And will send on it Husban (torment, bolt) from the sky}***, i.e. torment or heavy rain that uproots its trees and plants, ***{then it will be a slippery earth}***, i.e. soft dust that does not grow plants or anything. ***{Or the water thereof (of the gardens) becomes deep-sunken (underground)}*** that is opposite to the overflowing

water, ***{so that you will never be able to seek it}***, i.e. you will never be able to restore or regain it. Then, Allah the Almighty says: ***{So his fruits were encircled (with ruin)}***, i.e. all his fruits and plants were ruined and totally destroyed. ***{And he remained clapping his hands (with sorrow) over what he had spent upon it, while it was all destroyed on its trellises}***, i.e. totally destroyed and perfectly ruined. That was really against his hopes and wishes as he previously said: ***{I think not that this will ever perish}***. So, he regretted his previous acts and sayings that declared him as a disbeliever in Allah the Almighty and he could only say: ***{Would that I had ascribed no partners to my Lord!}***. Then, Allah the Almighty says: ***{And he had no group of men to help him against Allah, nor could he defend (or save) himself}***, i.e. he could neither be helped by others, or even help himself. This is as the Statement of Allah that reads: ***{Then he will have no power, nor any helper}***, (At-Tariq, 10) and His Saying, ***{There (on the Day of Resurrection), Al-Walayah (protection, power, authority and kingdom) will be for Allah (Alone), the True God}***, i.e. the irrefutable judgment and irresistible ruling on this and on all conditions will be for Allah the Almighty Alone. ***{He (Allah) is the Best for reward and the Best for the final end}***, i.e. trading with Allah is better than anything else as He gives the best of all

rewards and with Him rests the best of all ends and goals. Finally, this story denotes three things:

(a) One should not sell himself out to the luxuries of this present life of ours and should not be deluded thereof. Moreover, one should trust what is in Allah's Hand more than what is in his own hand. One should put his entire trust in Allah Alone. Obedience of Allah should be one's first and final goal. Anyone who prefers anything to Allah and His obedience surely will be tormented thereof.

(b) One should whole-heartedly accept the advice of his compassionate brother, as in rejecting his counsel or advice there rests complete destruction and perfect ruin.

(c) Regretting goes in vain if the Divine Decree is already done.

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

(14)

People of the Garden

Allah the Almighty says:

إِنَّا بَلَوْنَاهُمْ كَمَا بَلَوْنَا أَصْحَابَ الْجَنَّةِ إِذْ أَقْسَمُوا لَيَصْرِمُنَّهَا مُصْبِحِينَ(١٧) وَلا يَسْتَثْنُونَ(١٨)فَطَافَ عَلَيْهَا طَائِفٌ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَهُمْ نَائِمُونَ(١٩) فَأَصْبَحَتْ كَالصَّرِيمِ(٢٠)فَتَنَادَوا مُصْبِحِينَ(٢١)أَنْ اغْدُوا عَلَى حَرْثِكُمْ إِنْ كُنتُمْ صَارِمِينَ(٢٢)فَانطَلَقُوا وَهُمْ يَتَخَافَتُونَ(٢٣)أَنْ لا يَدْخُلَنَّهَا الْيَوْمَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِسْكِينٌ(٢٤)وَغَدَوْا عَلَى حَرْدٍ قَادِرِينَ(٢٥)فَلَمَّا رَأَوْهَا قَالُوا إِنَّا لَضَالُّونَ(٢٦)بَلْ نَحْنُ مَحْرُومُونَ(٢٧) قَالَ أَوْسَطُهُمْ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكُمْ لَوْلا تُسَبِّحُونَ(٢٨)قَالُوا سُبْحَانَ رَبِّنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا ظَالِمِينَ(٢٩)فَأَقْبَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ يَتَلاوَمُونَ(٣٠)قَالُوا يَاوَيْلَنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا طَاغِينَ(٣١)عَسَى رَبُّنَا أَنْ يُبْدِلَنَا خَيْرًا مِنْهَا إِنَّا إِلَى رَبِّنَا رَاغِبُونَ(٣٢)كَذَلِكَ الْعَذَابُ وَلَعَذَابُ الْآخِرَةِ أَكْبَرُ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ(٣٣) (القلم : ١٧-٣٣)

{Verily, We have tried them as We tried the people of the garden, when they swore to pluck the fruits of the (garden) in the morning. Without saying: Insha' Allah (If Allah wills). Then there passed by on the (garden) a visitation (fire) from

your Lord at night and burnt it while they were asleep. So the (garden) became black by the morning, like a pitch dark night (in complete ruins). Then they called out one to another as soon as the morning broke. Saying: "Go to your tilth in the morning, if you would pluck the fruits." So they departed, conversing in secret low tones (saying): No Miskin (poor man) shall enter upon you into it today. And they went in the morning with strong intention, thinking that they have power (to prevent the poor taking anything of the fruits therefrom). But when they saw the (garden), they said: "Verily, we have gone astray." (Then they said): "Nay! Indeed we are deprived of (the fruits)!" The best among them said: "Did I not tell you: why say you not: Insha' Allah (If Allah wills)." They said: "Glory to Our Lord! Verily, we have been Zalimun (wrong-doers)." Then they turned one against another, blaming. They said: "Woe to us! Verily, we were Taghun (transgressors and disobedient). We hope that our Lord will give us in exchange a better (garden) than this. Truly, we turn to our Lord (wishing for good that He may forgive our sins and reward us in the Hereafter). Such is the punishment (in this life), but truly the punishment of the Hereafter is greater if they but knew}. (Al-Qalam, 17-33)

This is an example set by Allah the Almighty for the polytheists of Quraish as He favored them with sending the honorable and great Prophet, Muhammad (Peace be upon him), but they belied him and rejected what he had brought them. Almighty Allah, says: ***{Have you not seen those who have changed the Blessings of Allah into disbelief (by denying Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) and his Message of Islam), and caused their people to dwell in the house of destruction? Hell, in which they will burn, - and what an evil place to settle in!}.*** (Ibrahim, 28, 29) Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) said: They are the polytheists of Quraish whom were likened to the people of the garden that contained various fruits and plants that were ripe and the time of their harvesting has come. Thus, He, Glory be His, says: ***{When they swore}*** secretly ***{to pluck the fruits of the (garden)}*** i.e. to harvest it; ***{in the morning}*** in order not to be seen by either a poor, or a needy and be forced to donate to or give them any of its fruits. So, they swore to this without saying "*If Allah wills*". Consequently, Allah the Almighty disabled them and sent over their garden fire that burnt it and left nothing thereof. He, Glory be His, says: ***{Then, there passed by on the (garden) a visitation (fire) from your Lord at night and burnt it while they were asleep. So the (garden) became black by the morning,***

like a pitch dark night (in complete ruins)}.

Allah the Almighty says: ***{Then they called out one to another as soon as the morning broke}***, i.e. they got up in the morning and they called out one to another saying: ***{Go to your tilth in the morning, if you would pluck the fruits}***, i.e. go early to your garden and pluck the fruits before the poor and needy persons come to ask you for charity. The story goes: ***{So they departed, conversing in secret low tones}***, i.e. talking one to another in low tones saying: ***{No Miskin (poor man) shall enter upon you into it today}***, i.e. they agreed upon that and made mutual consultations thereto. The story goes on: ***{And they went in the morning with strong intention, thinking that they have power (to prevent the poor taking anything of the fruits therefrom)}***, i.e. they went forth with seriousness, power and strong bad intention.

`Ikrimah and Ash-Shu`abi said: ***{And they went in the morning with strong intention}***, i.e. rage and bad intention against the poor. ***{But when they saw the (garden)}***, i.e. when they reached their garden and found what had happened to it, upon this ***{they said: Verily, we have gone astray}***, i.e. we have lost our way to our own garden, then they said: ***{Nay! Indeed we are deprived of (the fruits)!}***, i.e. we

have been punished because of our bad intentions and were deprived of the blessing of our tilth.

And, ***{the best among them said}*** Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him), Mujahid and others said: He was the best and the most moderate and just one among them all. ***{Did I not tell you: why say you not: Insha' Allah (If Allah wills)}***, it was said: To say a good word instead of what you have intended. ***{They said: "Glory to Our Lord! Verily, we have been Zalimun (wrong-doers)." Then they turned one against another, blaming. They said: "Woe to us! Verily, we were Taghun (transgressors and disobedient)}***, they regretted and showed sorrow when both could do them nothing, and they confessed their sinful deed after they had been punished and all that went in vain.

It was said: That they were brothers and they inherited that garden from their late father who used to give much and much in charity. But, when they possessed the garden they denied the acting of their late father and intended to deprive the poor of its fruits. Thereupon, Allah the Almighty punished them and gave them the severest of penalties. For this, Allah the Almighty commanded that charity must be taken out of fruits and it is preferably to be paid on the day of harvesting. He says: ***{Eat of their fruit when they ripen, but pay the due thereof (its***

Zakah, according to Allah's Orders 1/10th or 1/20th) on the day of its harvest}. (Al-An`am, 141)

It was said: They were from the Yemen, from a town called "Darwan". It was also said: They were from Abyssinia. Allah knows best!

Allah the Almighty says: ***{Such is the punishment}***, i.e. like this We punish whose who disobey Our Command and does not show kindness to the needy from among Our creatures. ***{But truly the punishment of the Hereafter is greater}*** than that of the present life ***{if they but knew}***.

This story resembles Allah's Saying: ***{And Allah puts forward the example of a township, that dwelt secure and well-content: its provision coming to it in abundance from every place, but it (its people) denied the Favors of Allah (with ungratefulness). So Allah made it taste extreme of hunger (famine) and fear, because of that (evil, i.e. denying Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him)) which they (its people) used to do. And verily, there had come unto them a Messenger (Muhammad (Peace be upon him)) from among themselves, but they denied him, so the torment overtook them while they were Zalimun (polytheists and wrong-doers)}***. (An-Nahl, 112, 113) It was said that this example was of the

people of Mecca set for themselves and verily, there is no contradiction in this. Allah knows best!

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

(15)

The *Sabbath*-Breakers

Allah the Almighty says:

وَاسْأَلْهُمْ عَنْ الْقَرْيَةِ الَّتِي كَانَتْ حَاضِرَةَ الْبَحْرِ إِذْ يَعْدُونَ فِي السَّبْتِ إِذْ تَأْتِيهِمْ حِيتَانُهُمْ يَوْمَ سَبْتِهِمْ شُرَّعًا وَيَوْمَ لا يَسْبِتُونَ لا تَأْتِيهِمْ كَذَلِكَ نَبْلُوهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ(١٦٣)وَإِذْ قَالَتْ أُمَّةٌ مِنْهُمْ لِمَ تَعِظُونَ قَوْمًا اللَّهُ مُهْلِكُهُمْ أَوْ مُعَذِّبُهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا قَالُوا مَعْذِرَةً إِلَى رَبِّكُمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ (١٦٤)فَلَمَّا نَسُوا مَا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ أَنْجَيْنَا الَّذِينَ يَنْهَوْنَ عَنْ السُّوءِ وَأَخَذْنَا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا بِعَذَابٍ بَئِيسٍ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ(١٦٥) فَلَمَّا عَتَوْا عَن مَّا نُهُوا عَنْهُ قُلْنَا لَهُمْ كُونُوا قِرَدَةً خَاسِئِينَ(١٦٦) (الأعراف : ١٦٣-١٦٦)

وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمْ الَّذِينَ اعْتَدَوْا مِنْكُمْ فِي السَّبْتِ فَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ كُونُوا قِرَدَةً خَاسِئِينَ(٦٥)فَجَعَلْنَاهَا نَكَالاً لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهَا وَمَا خَلْفَهَا وَمَوْعِظَةً لِلْمُتَّقِينَ (٦٦) (البقرة : ٦٥-٦٦)

يَاأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ آمِنُوا بِمَا نَزَّلْنَا مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا مَعَكُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ نَطْمِسَ وُجُوهًا فَنَرُدَّهَا عَلَى أَدْبَارِهَا أَوْ نَلْعَنَهُمْ كَمَا لَعَنَّا أَصْحَابَ السَّبْتِ وَكَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ مَفْعُولاً(٤٧) (النساء : ٤٧)

{And ask them (O Muhammad (Peace be upon him)) about the town that was by the sea; when they transgressed in the matter of the Sabbath (i.e. Saturday): when their fish came to them openly on the Sabbath day, and did not come to them on the day they had no Sabbath. Thus We made a trial of them, for they used to rebel against Allah's Command (disobey Allah). And when a community among them said: "Why do you preach to a people whom Allah is about to destroy or to punish with a severe torment?" (The preachers) said: "in order to be free from guilt before your Lord (Allah), and perhaps they may fear Allah." So when they forgot the remindings that had been given to them, We rescued those who forbade evil, but We seized those who did wrong with a severe torment because they used to rebel against Allah's Command (disobey Allah). So when they exceeded the limits of what they were prohibited, We said to them: "Be you monkeys, despised and rejected}. (Al-A`raf, 163-166)

And, *{And indeed you knew those amongst you who transgressed in the matter of the Sabbath (i.e. Saturday). We said to them: "Be you monkeys, despised and rejected." So We made this punishment an example to their own and to succeeding generations and a lesson to those who are Al-Muttaqun (the pious)}*. (Al-Baqarah, 65, 66)

And, ***{Or curse them as We cursed the Sabbath-breakers}***. (An-Nisa', 47)

`Abdullah Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, `Ikrimah, Qatadah, As-Sadiy and others said: they were the people of *Aylah*. Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) added: it was located between Median and At-Tur. They said: the people of *Aylah* were adhering attentively to the teachings of the Torah and the prohibition of the Sabbath at that time (the prohibition of fishing on Saturdays). Amazingly, the fish used to expose itself openly on Saturdays and disappear on the other days of the week, ***{when their fish came to them openly on the Sabbath day, and did not come to them on the day they had no Sabbath}***. Almighty Allah says ***{Thus We made a trial of them}***, i.e. We test them through sending great numbers of fish on the Sabbath. ***{for they used to rebel against Allah's Command (disobey Allah)}***, i.e. because of their disobedience and rebellion. When they saw this, they made a trick to catch the fish on the Sabbath. They fixed their fishing nets and ropes and excavated streams allowing the sea water to run through and the fish to get in but never go back to the sea. They made all this on Friday, in preparation for the coming of the fish on Saturday. And thus, the fish came on the supposedly-peaceful day (knowing not what has been prepared against them). They were caught in the nets, ropes and

artificial streams. When the Saturday came to an end, the people of *Aylah* were present to take their fat catch. Consequently, Allah the Almighty was angry with them and He cursed them because of their trickery and deception. When this was done by a group thereof, the rest who did not participate in their sinful acting were divided into two sects: a sect that rejected their acting and trickery against the Law and Command of Allah the Almighty at that time. The second sect did not reject or forbid them, rather they disapproved of the reaction of the sect that forbade the sinful ones saying: ***{Why do you preach to a people whom Allah is about to destroy or to punish with a severe torment?}***, i.e. what is the gain in preaching to a people whom will inevitably be punished by Allah the Almighty? But, the second sect (the preachers) replied saying: ***{In order to be free from guilt before your Lord (Allah)}***, i.e. as we are commanded by Him to enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil; thus, we observe this for our fear of His Torment. ***{And perhaps they may fear Allah}***, i.e. perhaps those who made these sins may repent to Allah and regret what they have done and thus be saved from the punishment of Allah and that He forgives them all.

Allah the Almighty says: ***{So when they forgot the remindings that had been given to them}***, i.e. were heedless towards the godly preachers, ***{We***

rescued those who forbade evil}, i.e. the preaching sect, but ***{We seized those who did wrong}***, i.e. doers of the sinful deed, ***{with a severe torment}***, i.e. a painful punishment, ***{because they used to rebel against Allah's Command (disobey Allah)}***. Then, Allah explained the torment that befell them saying, ***{So when they exceeded the limits of what they were prohibited, We said to them: "Be you monkeys, despised and rejected}***.

Here, the point is that Allah the Almighty informed us that He destroyed the wrong-doers, saved the preaching believers and left the believers who did not practice enjoining the good and forbidding the evil. Scholars disputed regarding the third group. Some said they were granted salvation. And others said that they were destroyed with the wrong-doers. But, the first view is the accepted one by the well-versed scholars, including Ibn `Abbas – head of the interpreters – who referred to this opinion on a debate with his master `Ikrimah who – upon the victory of Ibn `Abbas – granted him a valuable garment as a reward.

It should be noted here that the third group were not mentioned with those given salvation even though they despised the sinful deed with their hearts, because they should have compelled their organs (hand or tongue) to act thereupon and declare

their rejection of the wrong-doers' act. So, they were saved with the preachers because they themselves did not commit the sinful deed, rather they rejected it with their hearts.

Narrated `Abdur Razzaq after Juraij after a man (whose name is not known) after `Ikrimah after Ibn `Abbas; and Malik transmitted from Ibn Ruman, Shaiban, Qatadah and `Ata' Al-Kharasani what means: Those who committed the sinful deed were abandoned by the rest of the people of the town. Some of them declared their rejection and denial of their deed. They did not listen to the preachers. Afterwards, they used to stay the night apart from the rest of the people of the town and there were doors or barriers between them and the rest of the people who were anticipating the befalling of punishment over them. One day, their doors did not open till the noon. The people got anxious and sent one of them to see what happened to them from above the barrier. When he looked he found them turned into monkeys with tails, shouting. They opened the doors (barrier) and the monkeys recognized their relatives while their relatives could not recognize them. Thereupon, the preachers said: Did not we forbid you from doing this? The monkeys made a sign with their heads denoting: Yes. Then, `Abdullah Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) wept and said: verily, we see

many wrong-doings which we do not reject or deny or even make a comment!

Narrated Al-`Ufi after Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) saying: the young men of the town were turned into monkeys, while the old men into pigs. Moreover, Ibn Abu Hatim narrated from Mujaḥid after Ibn `Abbas his saying: they did not live long and they left no offspring. Also, Ad-Dahhaq narrated from Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him): no monster has lived more than three days. In addition, they did not eat, drink or leave offspring.

Narrated Ibn Abu Hatim and Ibn Jarir after Ibn Abu Nujaih from Mujahid his saying: only their hearts and not their figures were turned into monkeys and pigs. This is just like His Statement that reads: ***{The likeness of those who were entrusted with the (obligation of the) Taurat (Torah) (i.e. to obey its commandments and practice its laws), but who subsequently failed in those (obligations), is as the likeness of a donkey which carries huge burdens of books (but understands nothing from them)}***. (Al-Jumu`ah, 5) But, this view seems to be very strange and it contradicts the apparent meaning of the Glorious Qur'an and the concession of the earlier scholars and those who followed them. Allah knows best!

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

(16)

Story of Luqman

Allah the Almighty says:

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا لُقْمَانَ الْحِكْمَةَ أَنْ اشْكُرْ لِلَّهِ وَمَنْ يَشْكُرْ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ(١٢)وَإِذْ قَالَ لُقْمَانُ لِابْنِهِ وَهُوَ يَعِظُهُ يَابُنَيَّ لا تُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ(١٣)وَوَصَّيْنَا الإِنسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهْنًا عَلَى وَهْنٍ وَفِصَالُهُ فِي عَامَيْنِ أَنْ اشْكُرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ إِلَيَّ الْمَصِيرُ(١٤) وَإِنْ جَاهَدَاكَ عَلى أَنْ تُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلا تُطِعْهُمَا وَصَاحِبْهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا وَاتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ مَنْ أَنَابَ إِلَيَّ ثُمَّ إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ(١٥)يَابُنَيَّ إِنَّهَا إِنْ تَكُنْ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِنْ خَرْدَلٍ فَتَكُنْ فِي صَخْرَةٍ أَوْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ أَوْ فِي الأَرْضِ يَأْتِ بِهَا اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَطِيفٌ خَبِيرٌ(١٦)يَابُنَيَّ أَقِمْ الصَّلاةَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَانْهَ عَنْ الْمُنكَرِ وَاصْبِرْ عَلَى مَا أَصَابَكَ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الأُمُورِ(١٧) وَلا تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ وَلا تَمْشِ فِي الأَرْضِ مَرَحًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ(١٨)وَاقْصِدْ فِي مَشْيِكَ وَاغْضُضْ مِنْ صَوْتِكَ إِنَّ أَنكَرَ الْأَصْوَاتِ لَصَوْتُ الْحَمِيرِ(١٩) (لقمان : ١٢-١٩)

{And indeed We bestowed upon Luqman Al-Hikmah (wisdom and religious understanding) saying: "Give thanks to Allah." And whoever gives thanks, he gives thanks for (the good of) his own self. And whoever is unthankful, then verily, Allah is All-Rich (Free of all needs), Worthy of all praise. And (remember) when Luqman said to his son when he was advising him: "O my son! Join not in worship others with Allah. Verily, joining others in worship with Allah is a great Zulm (wrong) indeed. And We have enjoined on man (to be dutiful and good) to his parents. His mother bore him in weakness and hardship upon weakness and hardship, and his weaning is in two years - give thanks to Me and to our parents. Unto Me is the final destination. But if they (both) strive with you to make you join in worship with Me others that of which you have no knowledge, then obey them not; but behave with them in the world kindly, and follow the path of him who turns to Me in repentance and in obedience. Then to Me will be your return, and I shall tell you what you used to do. "O my son! If it be (anything) equal to the weight of a grain of mustard seed, and though it be in a rock, or in the heavens or in the earth, Allah will bring it forth. Verily, Allah is Subtle (in bringing out that grain), Well-Aware (of its place). "O my son! Aqim-As-Salat (perform As-Salat),

enjoin (on people) Al-Ma`ruf (Islamic Monotheism and all that is good), and forbid (people) from Al-Munkar (i.e. disbelief in the Oneness of Allah, polytheists of all kinds and all that is evil and bad), and bear with patience whatever befalls you. Verily, these are some of the important commandments (ordered by Allah with no exemption). "And turn not your face away from men with pride, nor walk in insolence through the earth. Verily, Allah likes not any arrogant boaster." "And be moderate (or show no insolence) in your walking and lower your voice. Verily, the harshest of all voices is the braying of the ass"}. (Luqman, 12-19)

He is Luqman Ibn `Anqa' Ibn Sadun. Or, as stated by As-Suhaili from Ibn Jarir and Al-Qutaibi that he is Luqman Ibn Tharan who was from among the people of *Aylah* (Jerusalem).

He was a pious man who exerted himself in worship and who was blessed with wisdom. Also, it is said that he was a judge during the lifetime of Prophet Dawud (Peace be upon him). And, Allah knows best.

Narrated Sufyan Ath-Thawri from Al-Ash`ath after `Ikrimah on the authority of Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) as saying: He was an

Ethiopian slave who worked as a carpenter. Qatadah narrated from `Abdullah Ibn Az-Zubair as saying: I asked Jabir Ibn `Abdullah about Luqman. He said: "He was short with a flat nose. He was from Nubia"

Narrated Yahia Ibn Sa`id Al-Ansari after Sa`id Ibn Al-Musayib his saying: Luqman belonged to the black men of Egypt. He had thick lips and Allah the Almighty granted him wisdom but not Prophethood. Al-Awza`i said: I was told by `Abdur Rahman Ibn Harmalah: that a black man came to Sa`id Ibn Al-Musayib asking him for charity. Sa`id said: do not feel distressed for your black color because there were from among the best of all people three black men: Bilal Ibn Rabah, Mahja` (the freed-slave of `Umar Ibn Al-Khattab), and Luqman, the wise who was black, from Nubia and whose lips were thick.

Narrated Al-A`mash after Mujahid: Luqman was a black huge slave, thick-lipped, and cracked-footed. `Umar Ibn Qais said: "*Luqman was a black slave, thick-lipped and cracked-footed. It happened while he was preaching some people, a man came to him and said: aren't you the one who used to look after the sheep with me at such and such place? Luqman said: yes, I am! The man said: then, what made you of that position? Luqman said: telling the truth and keeping silent regarding what does not*

concern me." (This Hadith was narrated by Ibn Jarir after Ibn Hamid after Al-Hakam)

Ibn Abu Hatim said: I was told by Abu Zar`ah that he was told by Safwan after Al-Walid after `Abdur Rahman Ibn Abu Yazid Ibn Jabir who said: "*Allah the Almighty raised Luqman's status for his wisdom. A man used to know him saw him and said: Aren't you the slave of so and so who used to look after my sheep not so long in the past? Luqman said: yes! The man said: What raised you to this high state I see? Luqman said: the Divine Decree, repaying the trust, telling the truth and discarding what does not concern me.*"

Narrated Ibn Wahb: I was told by `Abdullah Ibn `Ayyash Al-Fityani after `Umar, the freed slave of `Afrah as saying: "*A man came to Luqman, the wise and asked: Are you Luqman? Are you the slave of so and so? He said: "Yes!" The man said: You are the black shepherd! Luqman said: As for my black color, it is obviously apparent, so what makes you so astonished? The man said: You became frequently visited by the people who pleasingly accept your judgments! Luqman said: O cousin! If you do what I am telling you, you will be like this. The man said: What is it? Luqman said: Lowering my gaze, watching my tongue, eating what is lawful, keeping my chastity, undertaking my promises, fulfilling my*

commitments, being hospitable to guests, respecting my neighbors, and discarding what does not concern me. All these made me the one you are looking at."

One day Abu Ad-Darda' mentioned Luqman the wise and said: He was not granted wisdom because of wealth, children, lineage, or given habits, but he was self-restrained, taciturn, deep-thinking, and he never slept during the day. In addition, no one has ever seen him spitting, clearing his throat, squeezing the lemon, answering the call of nature, bathing, observing trivialities, or foolishly laughing. He was very eloquent and well-versed. He did not weep or cry when all his children died. Finally, he used to frequent the princes and men of authority to mediate and think thoroughly and find admonition. So, because of all these he was granted that great wisdom.

Some people claimed that he was offered Prophethood, and that he feared not to be able to carry out its requirements and obligations. Thus, he chose to have wisdom for it is easier - this cannot be totally true - and Allah knows best! `Ikrimah also narrated that: Luqman was a Prophet.[1]

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[1]This narration is very weak for the sub-narrator, Al-Ja`fi is mentioned by Imams Al-Bukhari and An-Nasa'i among the Weak Narrators.

However, the majority of scholars are of the view that he was a wise man and not a Prophet. Moreover, he was mentioned in the Glorious Qur'an and was highly praised by Allah the Almighty Who narrates his advice to his own son in which he says: ***{O my son! Join not in worship others with Allah. Verily, joining others in worship with Allah is a great Zulm (wrong) indeed}***, so he forbade his son and warned him against joining others in worship with Allah. Imam Al-Bukhari said: I was told by Qutaibah after Jarir after Al-A`mash after Ibrahim after `Alqamah after `Abdullah as saying: *"When the Verse:* ***{It is those who believe and do not confuse their belief with wrong (i.e. joining others in worship with Allah}*** (Al-An`am, 82) *was revealed, we said: "O Allah's Messenger! Who is there amongst us who has not done wrong to himself?" He (Peace be upon him) replied: "It is not as you say, for 'wrong' in the Verse and 'do not confuse their belief with wrong' means 'SHIRK' (i.e. joining others in worship with Allah). Haven't you heard Luqman's saying to his son,* ***{O my son! Join not others in worship with Allah, verily joining others in worship with Allah is a great wrong indeed}****."* (Luqman, 13)

Then, Allah informs us of His advice to mankind to take care of parents. He states their rights on the

children and orders us to be kind with them even if they were polytheists. But, one should not obey them if they invite him to join others in worship with Allah. Then Allah resumes Luqman's advice to his son saying: ***{O my son! If it be (anything) equal to the weight of a grain of mustard seed, and though it be in a rock, or in the heavens or in the earth, Allah will bring it forth. Verily, Allah is Subtle (in bringing out that grain), Well-Aware (of its place)}***, i.e. he forbids him to do wrong to the people even in the slightest way, for Allah will bring it forth and bring him to account on the Day of Resurrection. Allah Almighty says: ***{Surely! Allah wrongs not even of the weight of an atom (or a small ant)}*** (An-Nisa', 40) and, ***{And We shall set up balances of justice on the Day of Resurrection, then none will be dealt with unjustly in anything. And if there be the weight of a mustard seed, We will bring it. And Sufficient are We to take account}*** (Al-Anbiya', 47) and, he told him if that wrong deed was equal to the weight of a grain of mustard seed, or if it was in a solid rock, or in the heavens or in the earth, Allah will bring it forth for He knows its exact place, ***{Verily, Allah is Subtle (in bringing out that grain), Well-Aware (of its place)}***. Allah Almighty also says: ***{And with Him are the keys of the Ghaib (all that is hidden), none knows them but He. And He knows whatever there is in the land and in the***

sea; not a leaf falls, but He knows it. There is not a grain in the darkness of the earth nor anything fresh or dry, but is written in a Clear Record} (Al-An`am, 59) and, ***{And there is nothing hidden in the heaven and the earth but it is in a Clear Book (i.e. Al-Lauh Al-Mahfuz)}*** (An-Naml, 75) and, ***{the All-Knower of the Unseen, it will come to you; not even the weight of an atom (or a small ant) or less than that or greater escapes His Knowledge in the heavens or in the earth but it is in a Clear Book (Al-Lauh Al-Mahfuz)}*** (Saba', 3).

As-Sadiy claimed that the rock mentioned in the Verse is that which lies beneath the seventh earth. But, this claim is totally rejected for the word "rock" is indefinite and if his claim were true, it would be "the rock". So, "rock" here means any rock whatever and not a particular one. Narrated Abu Sa`id Al-Khudri after Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) as saying: *"If any of you performs deeds in a solid rock that has no door or hole, his deeds, whatever they are, will come out (to the public)."*
Then, Luqman said: ***{O my son! Aqim-As-Salah (perform As-Salah)}***, i.e. perform it properly and in due time. Then, he said: ***{enjoin (on people) Al-Ma`ruf (Islamic Monotheism and all that is good), and forbid (people) from Al-Munkar (i.e. disbelief in the Oneness of Allah, polytheists of all kinds and***

all that is evil and bad)}, i.e. with your full power, with your hand, tongue and if you could not, let it be with your heart (i.e. reject and resent it). Then, he advised him to observe patience saying: ***{and bear with patience whatever befalls you}***, for if one enjoins what is good and forbids the evil, he will probably regarded as enemy to certain people (but, the final reward would surely be his). For this, he commanded him to observe patience. ***{Verily, these are some of the important commandments (ordered by Allah with no exemption)}*** that are inevitable and cannot be neglected.

Allah the Almighty says: ***{And turn not your face away from men with pride}***, narrated Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, `Ikrimah, Sa`id Ibn Jubair, Ad-Dahhak, Yazid Ibn Al-Asam, Abu Al-Jawza' and others: This means one shouldn't be showy or arrogant.

Allah the Almighty says: ***{nor walk in insolence through the earth. Verily, Allah likes not any arrogant boaster}***, here, Luqman forbids his son to strut in his walk. Allah the Almighty says: ***{And walk not on the earth with conceit and arrogance. Verily, you can neither rend nor penetrate the earth, nor can you attain a stature like the mountains in height}***. (Al-Isra', 37) i.e. you will

neither be able to tread the whole earth, nor penetrate it with your fast walking or strong footsteps, nor will you be as high as mountains with your showing-off or arrogance. So, know yourself well, for you are only a human being (created to worship Allah Alone). The Prophetic Hadith states: *"While a man was walking, dragging his dress with pride, he was caused to be swallowed by the earth and will go on sinking in it till the Day of Resurrection."* (Transmitted by Imam Al-Bukhari in his *Sahih*) Another Prophetic Hadith states that: *"Beware dragging your dress with pride, for this is boastfulness which is not loved (liked) by Allah."* Allah the Almighty says: ***{Verily, Allah likes not any arrogant boaster}***.

After Luqman forbids his son to walk boastfully, he orders him to be moderate in his walking, saying: ***{And be moderate (or show no insolence) in your walking}***, i.e. do not walk fast or too slow, rather take a course in-between, ***{And the (faithful) slaves of the Most Gracious (Allah) are those who walk on the earth in humility and sedateness, and when the foolish address them (with bad words) they reply back with mild words of gentleness}***. (Al-Furqan, 63) Then, Luqman says: ***{and lower your voice}***, i.e. if you talk, do not raise your voice very loudly

because the braying of the ass is the harshest of all voices.

Narrated Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him): The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: *"When you hear the crowing of cocks, ask for Allah's Blessings for (their crowing indicates that) they have seen an angel. And when you hear the braying of donkeys, seek Refuge with Allah from Satan for (their braying indicates) that they have seen a Satan."* (Transmitted by Imam Al-Bukhari in his *Sahih*). For this, it is forbidden to raise one's voice needlessly. But, raising the voice with the *Adhan* (the Call to Prayer) and in the battlefield is permitted.

These are the pieces of advice given by Luqman to his son that are mentioned in the Glorious Qur'an. Many others have been mentioned in a book titled *Hikmat Luqman* (Luqman's Wisdom). From this valuable book, we cite the following:

Narrated Imam Ahmed that Ibn `Umar (May Allah be pleased with both of them) said: We were told by Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) that:

"Luqman, the wise used to say: If anything was entrusted to Allah, He would preserve it."[1]

Narrated Ibn Hatim that Al-Qasim Ibn Mukhaimirah reported that Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) said: *"Luqman said to his son when he was advising him: "O my son! Beware of masking for it is treason by night and dispraise during the day."*

Narrated Damurah after As-Sariy Ibn Yahia as saying: *Luqman said to his son: "On my son! Verily, wisdom has brought the indigent to the courts of kings."*

I was told by my father after `Abdah Ibn Sulaiman after Ibn Al-Mubarak after `Abdur Rahman Al-Mas`udi after `Aun Ibn `Abdullah as saying: *Luqman said to his son: "O my son! If you come to a people's setting, start them with salutation (Saying As-Salamu `Alaikum (Peace be with you)), then, take a side and do not utter a word till they speak. If you find them observing the Remembrance of Allah, join them. But, if they observe anything else, turn away from them and seek others (who*

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[1] This narration has a weak sub-narrator in its chain, i.e. Qaz`ah Ibn Suwaid Ibn Hujair Al-Bahili (as mentioned in *An-Nasa'i's Weak and Rejected Narrators*)

remember Allah Almighty).”

I was told by my father after `Amr Ibn `Uthman after Damurah Ibn Hafs Ibn `Umar as saying: *“Luqman placed a bag of mustards beside him and started to advise his son, giving him with every piece of advice a mustard till it all ran out. He said: O my son! I gave you advice that if a mountain was given, it would split. He said: then, his son was as if struck.”*

Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) narrated: *“Take care of the black men for three from among them are of the people of Paradise: Luqman the wise, Negus and Bilal (the Caller to Prayer).”* (However, this Hadith is odd and rejected).

Imam Ahmed, in his book *Az-Zuhd* (Asceticism), mentioned Luqman's biography and many other valuable things. He said: I was told by Waki` after Sufyan after an unidentified man after Mujahid as saying: Allah's Statement: ***{And indeed We bestowed upon Luqman Al-Hikmah}***, i.e. wisdom and religious understanding. He added: he was not a Prophet. The same was narrated by Wahb Ibn Munabih.

Waki` told us after Sufyan after Ash`ath after `Ikrimah after Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased

with him) that he said: Luqman was an Ethiopian slave.

Aswad told us after Hammad after `Ali Ibn Yazid after Sa`id Ibn Al-Musaiyb as saying: Luqman was a tailor.

Saiyar told us after Ja`far after Malik Ibn Dinar as saying: Luqman said to his son: "O my son! Take Allah's Obedience as your trade, and you will gain profits without having any merchandises."

Yazid told us after Abul Ashhab after Muhammad Ibn Wasi` as saying: Luqman said to his son: "O my son! Fear Allah and do not let the people notice that you fear Him to gain honor (from them) while your heart is sinful."

Yazid Ibn Harun and Waki` told us after Abul Ashhab after Khalid Ar-Rab`i as saying: "Luqman was an Ethiopian slave who worked as a carpenter. One day, his master ordered him to slaughter a goat and bring him the most pleasant and delicious two parts thereof. Luqman did so and brought him the tongue and heart. The master asked: Did not you find anything more pleasant than these? Luqman said: No! After a while, the master ordered him to slaughter a goat and to throw the most malignant two parts thereof. Luqman slaughtered the goat and

threw the tongue and heart. The master exclaimed and said: I ordered you to bring me the most delicious parts thereof and you brought me the tongue and heart, and I ordered you to throw away the most malignant parts thereof and you threw the tongue and heart, how can this be? Luqman said: Nothing can be more pleasing than these if they were good, and nothing can be more malicious than these if they were malignant."

Dawud Ibn Rashid told us after Ibn Al-Mubarak after Mu`amir after Abu `Uthman, a man from Basrah, as saying: Luqman said to his son: "O my son! Do not wish for befriending a fool that he may think you approve his foolishness. And, do not take the wise man's rage easily that he may abstain from you."

Dawud Ibn Usaid told us after Isma`il Ibn `Ayyash after Damdam Ibn Zar`ah after Shuraih Ibn `Ubaid Al-Hadrami after `Abdullah Ibn Zaid as saying: Luqman said: "Verily, Allah's Hand is on the mouths of wise men; none of them speaks but with what Allah assigned for him."

`Abdur Razzaq told us that he heard Ibn Juraij as saying: I used to mask my head at night and `Umar said to me: Did not you hear that Luqman had said: masking during the day is humiliation and

at night is dispraise. So, why do you mask yourself at night? He said: "Luqman was not indebted."

I was told by Hasan after Al-Junaid after Sufyan as saying: Luqman said to his son: "O my son! I have never regretted because of keeping silent. If words are silver, silence is golden."

I was told by `Abdul Samad and Waki` after Abul Ashhab after Qatadah as saying: Luqman said to his son: "O my son! Set apart with evil and it will set apart with you, for evil begets nothing but evil."

Narrated Imam Ahmed: I was told by `Abdur Rahman Ibn Mahdi after Nafi` Ibn `Umar after Ibn Abu Malikah after `Ubaid Ibn `Umair as saying: *Luqman said to his son when he was advising him: "O my son! Choose between gatherings (of people) precisely! If you find a gathering in which Allah is mentioned, sit yourself with them. Thus, if you are knowledgeable, your knowledge will benefit you; but, if you are ignorant, they will teach you; and if Allah wishes to do them good, you will be benefited therewith. O my son! Do not sit in a gathering in which Allah is not mentioned! Because if you are knowledgeable, your knowledge will not benefit you; and if you are ignorant, they will add to your ignorance; and if Allah wishes to afflict them with harm, you will be afflicted with them. O my son! Do*

not rejoice at seeing a strong man who sheds the blood of the faithful, for Allah appoints for him a killer that does not ever die."

Abu Mu`awiyah told us after Hisham Ibn `Urwah after his father as saying: "Wisdom dictates: O my son: Let your speech be good and your face be smiling, you will be more loved by the people than those who give them provisions." And, he said: "It is stated in the wisdom – or the Torah – : "Kindness is the head of wisdom." And, he said: "It is stated in the Torah: "As you show mercy (to others), mercy will be shown to you." And, he said: "It is stated in the wisdom: "You will gain what you give (or, harvest what you grow)." And, he said: "It is stated in the wisdom: "Love your friend and the friend of your father."

`Abdur Razzaq told us after Mu`amir after Ayyub after Abu Qulabah as saying: Luqman was once asked: Who is the best one in terms of patience? He said: It is the one who practices no harm after observing patience. Those who asked him said: Who is the best one in terms of knowledge? He said: It is he who adds to his own knowledge through the knowledge of others. They asked: Who is the best from among the whole people? He said: It is the wealthy. They said: Is it the one who has properties and riches? He said: No! But, it is the one if whose

good was sought, he would not hold it back or prevent it. And, it is the one who does not need anything from others.

Narrated Sufyan Ibn `Uyaynah: Luqman was asked: Who is the worst of all people? He replied: It is the one who does not feel shame if found committing a sinful deed.

Abu As-Samad told us after Malik Ibn Dianr as saying: I found some pieces of wisdom as follows: "Allah Almighty scatters and wastes the bones of those who give religious opinions that go with the people's lusts and desires." And, "There is no good for you that you learn something new while you do not practice what you have learnt previously. This is like a man who gathered a pile of dry wood, then tried to carry it but couldn't. Thereupon, he collected a second one."

`Abdullah Ibn Ahmed said: I was told by Al-Hakam Ibn Abu Zuhair Ibn Musa after Al-Faraj Ibn Fudalah after Abu Sa`id as saying: Luqman said to his son: "O my son! Let only the pious men eat your food, and consult the scholars over your affairs." These were what Imam Ahmed quoted from the wisdom of Luqman, and I added some that he did not transmit and indeed, he – Imam Ahmed – quoted things that I did not. And, Allah knows best!

Ibn Abu Hatim said: I was told by my father after Al-`Abbas Ibn Al-Walid after Zaid Ibn Yahya Ibn `Ubaid Al-Khuza`i after Sa`id Ibn Bashir after Qatadah as saying: Allah Almighty enabled Luqman to choose between Prophethood and wisdom and he (Luqman) preferred wisdom to Prophethood. Then, Gabriel came while he was asleep and poured the wisdom over him. And, he began to pronounce it the next morning.

Sa`id said: I heard Qatadah as saying: It was said to Luqman: How did you prefer wisdom to Prophethood when you were enabled to choose between them? He said: If Allah were to assign me with Prophethood, I would accept it and try hard to win His Pleasure, but He enabled me to choose. I feared of being too weak for Prophethood, so I chose wisdom.

This narration is not perfectly authentic or sound for that sub-narrator, Sa`id Ibn Bashir, is not a trustworthy one. However, many from among our earlier scholars, foremost among whom were: Mujahid, Sa`id Ibn Al-Musayyb and Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) were of the viewpoint that Allah's Statement that reads: ***{And indeed We bestowed upon Luqman Al-Hikmah (wisdom)}***, means: discretion and religious understanding. Thereupon, he was not a Prophet and

nothing has been revealed to him *Al-Wahi* (Divine Inspiration).

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

(17)

People of the Ditch

Allah the Almighty says:

وَالسَّمَاء ذَات الْبُرُوج(١)وَالْيَوْم الْمَوْعُود(٢)وَشَاهِدٍ وَمَشْهُود(٣)قُتِلَ أَصْحَابُ الأخْدُود(٤)النَّار ذَات الْوَقُود(٥)إِذْ هُمْ عَلَيْهَا قُعُودٌ(٦)وَهُمْ عَلَى مَا يَفْعَلُونَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ شُهُودٌ(٧)وَمَا نَقَمُوا مِنْهُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ(٨)الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَات وَالأَرْض وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ(٩) إِنَّ الَّذِينَ فَتَنُوا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَات ثُمَّ لَمْ يَتُوبُوا فَلَهُمْ عَذَابُ جَهَنَّمَ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابُ الْحَرِيق(١٠) (البروج : ١-١٠)

{By the heaven holding the big stars. And by the Promised Day (i.e. the Day of Resurrection). And by the Witnessing day (i.e. Friday), and by the Witnessed day (i.e. the Day of `Arafat (Hajj) the ninth of Dhul-Hijjah]. Cursed were the people of the Ditch (in the story of the Boy and the King). Of fire fed with fuel. When they sat by it (fire). And they witnessed what they were doing against the believers (i.e. burning them). And they had no fault except that they believed in Allah, the All-Mighty,

Worthy of all Praise! To Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth! And Allah is Witness over everything. Verily, those who put into trial the believing men and believing women (by torturing them and burning them), and then do not turn in repentance (to Allah), then they will have the torment of Hell, and they will have the punishment of the burning Fire}. (Al-Buruj, 1-10)

Muhammad Ibn Ishaq claimed that they lived after the advent of Jesus (Peace be upon him), but other scholars disagreed with him claiming them to live before him (Peace be upon him). However, many scholars mentioned that this incident was repeated more than once. There is a Prophetic Hadith narrating the story of those mentioned in the Glorious Qur'an. Imam Ahmed said: I was told by Hammad Ibn Salamah after Thabit after `Abdur Rahman Ibn Abu Laila as saying: Suhaib (May Allah be pleased with him) reported that Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) thus said: *"There lived a king before you and he had a (court) magician. As he (the magician) grew old, he said to the king: I have grown old, send some young boy to me so that I should teach him magic. He (the king) sent him a young boy so that he should train him (in magic). And on his way (to the magician) he (the young boy) found a monk sitting there. He listened to the monk's talk and was impressed by it. It became*

his habit to pass by the monk and spent the time with him listening to his teachings and then leave to the magician late. He (the magician) beat him because of delay. He made a complaint of that to the monk and he said to him: When you feel afraid of the magician, say: Members of my family had detained me. And when you feel afraid of your family you should say: The magician had detained me. It so happened that there came a huge beast (of prey) and it blocked the way of the people, and he (the young boy) said: I will come to know today whether the magician is superior or the monk is superior. He picked up a stone and said: O Allah, if the affair of the monk is dearer to Thee than the affair of the magician, cause death to this animal so that the people should be able to move about freely. He threw that stone towards it and killed it and the people began to move about (on the path freely). He (the young man) then came to that monk and informed him and the monk said: Sonny, today you are superior to me. Your affair has come to a stage where I find that you would be soon put to a trial, and in case you are put to a trial don't give my clue. That young man began to treat the blind and those suffering from leprosy. He in fact began to cure people from (all kinds) of illness. When a companion of the king who had gone blind heard about him, he came to him with numerous gifts and said: If you cure me, all these things collected together here

would be yours. He said: I myself do not cure anyone. It is Allah Who cures and if you affirm faith in Allah, I shall also supplicate Allah to cure you. He affirmed his faith in Allah and Allah cured him and he came to the king and sat by his side as he used to sit before. The king said to him: Who restored your eyesight? He said: My Lord! The king got astounded: should it mean that your Lord is another One besides me. He said: My Lord and your Lord is Allah, so he (the king) took hold of him and tormented him till he gave a clue of that boy. The young man was thus summoned and the king said to him: O boy, it has been conveyed to me that you have become so much proficient in your magic that you cure the blind and those suffering from leprosy and you do such and such things. The boy said: I do not cure anyone; it is Allah Who cures. The king took hold of him and began to torment him. Eventually the boy gave a clue of the monk. The monk was thus summoned and it was said to him: You should turn back from your religion. He, however, refused to do so. He (ordered) for a saw to be brought (and when it was done) he (the king) placed it in the middle of his head and tore it into parts till a part fell down. Then the courtier of the king was brought and it was said to him: Turn back from your religion. And he refused to do so, and the saw was placed in the midst of his head and it was torn till a part fell down. Then that young boy was

brought and it was said to him: Turn back from your religion. He refused to do so and he was handed over to a group of his courtiers. The king ruled: Take him to such and such mountain; make him climb up that mountain and when you reach its top (ask him to renounce his faith) but if he refuses to do so, then throw him (down the mountain). So they took him and made him climb up the mountain and he said: O Allah, save me from them (in any way) Thou likest and the mountain began to quake and they all fell down and that person came walking to the king. The king said to him: What has happened to your companions (the courtiers)? He said: Allah has saved me from them. He again handed him to some of his courtiers and said: Take him and carry him in a small boat and when you reach the middle of the ocean (ask him to renounce) his religion, but if he does not renounce his religion throw him (into the water). So they took him and the boy said: O Allah, save me from them and what they want to do. It was quite soon that the boat turned over and they were drowned and he came walking to the king, and the king said to him: What has happened to your companions (the courtiers)? He said: Allah has saved me from them, and he said to the king: You cannot kill me until you do what I ask you to do. And he said: What is that? He said: You should gather people in a plain and hang me by the trunk (of a tree). Then take hold of an arrow from the quiver

and say: In the name of Allah, the Lord of the worlds; then shoot an arrow and if you do that then you would be able to kill me. The king called the people in an open plain and tied the boy to the trunk of a tree, then he took hold of an arrow from his quiver and then placed the arrow in the bow and then said: In the Name of Allah, the Lord of the young boy; he then shot an arrow and it bit his temple. He (the boy) placed his hands upon the temple where the arrow had bit him and he died and the people said: We affirm our faith in the Lord of this young man, we affirm our faith in the Lord of this young man, we affirm our faith in the Lord of this young man. The courtiers came to the king and it was said to him: Do you see that Allah has actually done what you aimed at averting. They (the people) have affirmed their faith in the Lord. The king commanded ditches to be dug at certain points in the path. When these ditches were dug, and the fire was lit in them it was said (to the people): He who would not turn back from his (the boy's) religion would be thrown in the fire or it would be said to them to jump in it. (The people courted death but did not renounce religion) till a woman came with her child and she felt hesitant in jumping into the fire and the child said to her: O mother, endure (this ordeal) for it is the Truth." (Transmitted by Imam Ahmed, Imam Muslim and An-Nasa'i from the Hadith of Hammad Ibn Salamah).

Some scholars claimed that the incident of the ditch was recurred or repeated in the past more than once. Ibn Abu Hatim said: I was told by my father after Abul Yaman after Safwan Ibn `Abdur Rahman Ibn Jubair as saying: the incident of the ditch took place in the Yemen during the lifetime of Tubba`. And, it took place in Constantinople during the lifetime of Constantine who set the fires in which he threw the Christians who were sticking to the religion of Jesus (Islamic Monotheism). It also took place in Iraq, in the land of Babylon during the lifetime of Bikhtinassar who erected an idol and ordered the people to prostrate themselves before it. Daniel, `Izrya and Mashayl refused and thereupon, he set a great fire and threw them into it. However, Allah Almighty saved them from the fire and caused the nine men who transgressed over them to fell into the fire they themselves made.

Concerning Allah's Statement that reads: ***{Cursed were the people of the Ditch},*** As-Sadiy said: There were three ditches: one in *Sham* (Syria), another in Iraq, and the third in the Yemen. (Narrated by Ibn Abu Hatim)

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

(18)

Barsisa the Worshipper (The Renegade)

Allah the Almighty says in His Glorious Qur'an:

كَمَثَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِذْ قَالَ لِلإِنسَانِ اكْفُرْ فَلَمَّا كَفَرَ قَالَ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِنْكَ إِنِّي
أَخَافُ اللَّهَ رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ(١٦)فَكَانَ عَاقِبَتَهُمَا أَنَّهُمَا فِي النَّارِ خَالِدَيْنِ فِيهَا
وَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الظَّالِمِينَ(١٧) (الحشر : ١٦-١٧)

{(Their allies deceived them) like Shaitan (Satan), when he says to man: "Disbelieve in Allah." But when (man) disbelieves in Allah, Shaitan (Satan) says: "I am free of you, I fear Allah, the Lord of the `Alamin (mankind, jinn and all that exists)!" So the end of both will be that they will be in the Fire, abiding therein. Such is the recompense of the Zalimun (i.e. polytheists, wrong-doers, disbelievers in Allah and in His Oneness)}. (Al-Hashr, 16, 17)

Ibn Jarir said that `Abdullah Ibn Mas`ud interpreted the Qur'anic Verse that reads: ***{(Their allies deceived them) like Shaitan (Satan), when he says to man: "Disbelieve in Allah." But when (man) disbelieves in Allah, Shaitan (Satan) says: "I am free of you, I fear Allah, the Lord of the `Alamin (mankind, jinn and all that exists)!" So the end of both will be that they will be in the Fire, abiding therein. Such is the recompense of the Zalimun (i.e. polytheists, wrong-doers, disbelievers in Allah and in His Oneness)}***. (Al-Hashr, 16, 17)

Ibn Mas`ud (May Allah be pleased with him) said: Once upon a time, there was a woman grazing sheep and goats. She had four brothers. She (for some reason) used to spend the night at a monk's cell. The monk committed adultery with her and she got pregnant. Satan came to him and said: Kill the woman and then bury her for you are a reputable and highly respected man (i.e. don't risk your own reputation for such a simple woman). The monk killed her and then buried her. Thereupon, Satan visited her four brothers in a dream while they were asleep and said to them: the monk committed adultery with your sister, and because she got pregnant, he killed her and buried her in such-and-such location. In the morning, one of them said: "By Allah! Last night I dreamt of something and I do not

know whether to relate it to you or just keep it to myself?" They said: Relate it to us. He did so and one of them said: By Allah! I saw the same dream. Another said the same. And the fourth one said the same thing. They agreed on that there must be something serious about that dream. They went to the king and appealed for his help against the monk. The king's troops came to arrest him and he was taken away. On the way, Satan came to the monk (and whispered in his ears): I set you up. No one else can save you from this. Prostrate yourself before me just for once and in return, I will save you from this. Thereupon, the monk prostrated himself before Satan. When they presented themselves before the king, Satan said to him: I am free of you! Finally, the monk was killed.

The same story was narrated by the Leader of the Believers, `Ali Ibn Abu Talib (May Allah be pleased with him) in another wording. Ibn Jarir said: I was told by Khallad Ibn Aslam, on the authority of An-Nadr Ibn Shamil after Shu`bah, after Abu Ishaq, after `Abdullah Ibn Nahik saying: I heard `Ali as saying: A monk worshipped Allah Alone for sixty years. Satan exerted himself to seduce him, but could not. He went to a woman and touched her with evil (maddened her). The woman had brothers whom were visited by Satan who told them to take her to that monk to receive treatment and cure. They took

her to the monk and he treated her. Afterwards, she stayed for a while at his cell (house). One day, he was attracted to her and he committed adultery with her. She got pregnant and he killed her (to conceal his first crime). Her brothers came (after knowing the matter) and Satan appeared again for the monk and said: I am your friend, I did not find a solution or way to mislead you, but (finally) I set you up. So, obey me and I will save you from this. Prostrate yourself before me and you will be saved. The monk did so. Then, Satan said: {*"I am free of you, I fear Allah, the Lord of the `Alamin (mankind, jinn and all that exists)!"*}. (Al-Hashr, 16) This is the interpretation of Allah's Saying: ***{(Their allies deceived them) like Shaitan (Satan), when he says to man: "Disbelieve in Allah." But when (man) disbelieves in Allah, Shaitan (Satan) says: "I am free of you, I fear Allah, the Lord of the `Alamin (mankind, jinn and all that exists)!" So the end of both will be that they will be in the Fire, abiding therein. Such is the recompense of the Zalimun (i.e. polytheists, wrong-doers, disbelievers in Allah and in His Oneness)}***. (Al-Hashr, 16, 17)

In the Name of *Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful*

(19)

Owners of the Elephant

Allah the Almighty says:

أَلَمْ تَرَى كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِأَصْحَابِ الْفِيلِ(١)أَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ كَيْدَهُمْ فِي تَضْلِيلٍ(٢)وَأَرْسَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ طَيْرًا أَبَابِيلَ(٣)تَرْمِيهِمْ بِحِجَارَةٍ مِنْ سِجِّيلٍ(٤) فَجَعَلَهُمْ كَعَصْفٍ مَأْكُولٍ(٥) (الفيل : ١-٥)

{Have you (O Muhammad (Peace be upon him)) not seen how your Lord dealt with the owners of the Elephant? [The Elephant army which came from Yemen under the command of Abraha Al-Ashram intending to destroy the Ka`bah at Makkah]. Did He not make their plot go astray? And He sent against them birds, in flocks. Striking them with stones of Sijjil (baked clay). And He made them like (an empty field of) stalks (of which the corn has been eaten up by cattle)}. (Al-Fil, 1-5)

At-Tabari said: The first one to tame elephants was Ifridun Ibn Athqiyan who killed Ad-Dahhaq. He was the first to use saddle for horses. But, the first

one to tame and ride on horses was Tahmuris, the third king on earth. It is also said that Isma`il Ibn Ibrahim (Peace be upon them) was the first to ride horses. It is probably that he was the first one to ride on them from among the Arabs, and Allah knows the best.

It is said: Though the elephant is so huge, he fears from cats. Thereupon, some warlords, during their fight against the Indians, brought some cats to the battlefield the matter that forced the elephants to bolt.

Ibn Ishaq said: the governor or viceroy, Abraha Al-Ashram built a huge and very lofty church, and wrote to the king of Abyssinia, Negus that "I have built you a church that is unprecedented, and I am intending to divert pilgrimage from Mecca to Abyssinia".

Al-Suhaili said: Abraha Al-Ashram subjugated the Yemenites to build that mean church and forced them to taste several sorts of humiliation. He used to cut off the hand of the one who comes late for labor till the sun rises. He took many valuable things from the palace of Bilqis to add thereto. He took marbles, precious stones, and valuable luggage. Moreover, he erected gold and silver crosses, built ebony and ivory pulpits, and raised the church's stature and

expanded its width. Afterwards, when Abraha was killed, whosoever tried to take anything out of its body or ornaments, the Jinn were reluctant and hesitant to do him harm. For, it was built above the burial of two idols called Ku`aib and his wife, the height of which was about sixty cubits. So, the Yemenites left it untouched till the era of Al-Saffah, the first Abbaside Caliph. He, Al-Saffah, sent a group of pious scholars of will firm who totally demolished it, and it was destroyed then till the present day.

Ibn Ishaq said: When the Arabs heard of the letter of Abraha sent to Negus, a man from Kinanah got angry. He set out till he reached the church where he urinated on its walls.[1] No body noticed him, and upon that he returned home safely. The news reached Abraha who asked about the doer. He was answered: this was done by one of those Arabs who perform pilgrimage to the Ka`bah at Mecca when he heard of your declared intention that you would divert pilgrimage from their Sacred House to your (recently-built) church. He (the Arab) got angry and came to excrete therein declaring it to be unqualified (to the event). Upon hearing this, Abraha burst with rage and took oath that he would demolish

[1] As a sign of showing anger and mockery.

the *Ka`bah*. Then, he ordered the Abyssinians (Christians) to get prepared for war. He led a big expedition against Mecca accompanying an elephant or elephants in his train. The Arabs heard of the news and they were terrified, but they decided to fight him when the news was affirmed that he intended to destroy the Sacred House. A man from among the noblemen of Yemen called Dhu Nafar set out for him accompanied with his own clan and those who answered his call to fight against Abraha. The two parties met, Dhu Nafar and his followers were defeated and he himself was taken as a prisoner of war. He was then brought before Abraha who was about to kill him, but Dhu Nafar said: "O king! Don't kill me, I may be of any use to you." Abraha did not kill him and he kept him tied up in custody. Then Abraha went on intending what he set out for. He arrived at the land of Khath`am where he encountered with Nufail Ibn Habib Al-Khath`ami who was leading his two tribes - Shahran and Nahis - along with his followers from among the Arabs. Nufail was defeated and taken as a prisoner of war to be brought before Abraha. Abraha intended to kill him, but Nufail said: "O king! Don't kill me. I may guide you to the destination you desire. Here you are! My pledge of allegiance." Abraha set him free and took him as a guide. When they passed by Ta'if, there came to him Mas`ud Ibn Mu`tab Ibn Malik Ibn Ka`b Ibn `Amr Ibn Sa`d Ibn `Auf Ibn Thaqif

along with his followers who said: "O king! We are nothing but your slaves, we listen and obey, no hostility is ever there between you and us, and our House is not that which you want – i.e. Al-Lat – you only want the House in Mecca. Hence, we send with you someone who leads you thereto.

Ibn Ishaq said: Al-Lat was a 'sacred' House in Ta'if, it was to them just as the Ka`bah was to the rest of the Arabs. They sent a man called Abu Rughal to show him (Abraha) the way to Mecca. They went on till they arrived at a place called Al-Maghmas where Abu Rughal died. Abu Rughal was buried there and afterwards, the Arabs used to stone his grave. However, I mentioned on the Story of Thamud that Abu Rughal was among the train of Abraha and that he sheltered himself with the Sacred House (Ka`bah) and when he came out, a stone hit him and he was dead. The Prophet (Peace be upon him) told his Companions: "As a sign on this, he was buried with two branches of gold". They dug and verily, they found them. To compromise between this and the narration of Ibn Ishaq I say: the later Abu Rughal had the same name as his higher ancestor whose grave used to be stoned by the Arabs. Moreover, the people used to stone his grave as they stone that of the former.

Ibn Ishaq said: When Abraha arrived at Al-Maghmas, he sent a man called Al-Aswad Ibn Maqsud with a cavalry dispatch. Al-Aswad seized some of the Arab's property which included two hundred camels that belonged to `Abdul Muttalib, the Prophet's uncle, who was, then, the principal man among the nobility. Upon this, Quraish, Kinanah and Hudhail decided to fight against Abraha, but they comprehended that they cannot afford that and thus quitted the idea. Then, Abraha sent Hanatah Al-Himiari to Mecca ordering him to ask about the chief of the people and tell him: "I (the king) did not come to fight against you, I only came to destroy the Sacred House. If you do not stand in our way, we will not harm any of you all." Abraha added to his messenger: 'And if he showed his desire not to fight, bring him to me.' When Hanatah entered Mecca, he asked about its chief and master. He was told: it is `Abdul Muttalib Ibn Hashim. He saw him and thus delivered the message. `Abdul Muttalib said: "By Allah! We do not intend to fight. Really we cannot afford it. This is the Sacred House of Allah and His Khalil (friend) Ibrahim (Peace be upon him), only Him Alone can protect it if He wills to." Upon hearing this, Hanatah said: "Come with me to meet with him (Abraha), he ordered me to do so." `Abdul Muttalib set out for him accompanied with some of his sons till they approached the camp. He asked about Dhu Nafar who was a friend of his.

He entered upon him in his prison and said: "O Dhu Nafar! Can't you do anything for us in this plight of ours?" Dhu Nafar said: "What can a prisoner do while waiting for death to come either in the morning of at night? All that I can do is to send to the stableman of the elephant, Anis, who is a friend of mine to recommend you, say a good word of you, intercede for you before him, and to seek permission for you to meet with Abraha." `Abdul Muttalib said: "That's enough with me." Dhu Nafar sent to Anis saying: Verily, `Abdul Muttalib is the chief of the Quraishites, he is generous to both humans and animals and the king (Abraha) seized two hundred camels that belong to him. So, seek permission for him to meet Abraha and do whatever you see useful for him. Anis said: Surely, I will do. Anis presented himself before Abraha and then said: O king! The chief of Quraish is here and wants to present himself before you, so give him permission to, please! Abraha gave his consent. `Abdul Muttalib was very handsome and grand and when seen by Abraha, Abraha showed great respect and was highly impressed. So, he refused to make him sit lowly in front of him, and also disliked to let the Abyssinians see him allowing him to sit on his own chair (throne). Consequently, he descended from above his chair and sat besides him on the rich carpet. Then, he said to his interpreter: Ask him what does he want? However, Abraha was surprised to hear from

`Abdul Muttalib through the interpreter that all he wanted was a compensation for his two hundred camels, but did not ask him to leave the *Ka`bah* alone. When Abraha expressed surprise, `Abdul Muttalib answered: "I am the master of the camels, whereas the *Ka`bah* house of worship - has its lord to defend it". Abraha said: No one can defend it from me. `Abdul Muttalib said: You are on your own! Finally, Abraha gave him the camels back.

Ibn Ishaq said: It is said that when `Abdul Muttalib entered upon Abraha he was accompanied with Ya`mur Ibn Nafa'ah Ibn `Adiy Ibn Ad-Dail Ibn Bakr Ibn `Abd Manah Ibn Kinanah the chief of the Banu Bakr tribe and Khuwailid Ibn Wa'ilah the chief of the Hudhail tribe who offered Abraha one-third of the properties of Tihamah district in return for his going back and leaving the Ka`bah alone. But, Abraha refused their offer. Ibn Ishaq added: "I am not certain about the authenticity of this!"

When `Abdul Muttalib returned home he told the Quraishites about what happened between him and Abraha and ordered them to evacuate Mecca and move to the mountains. Then, he accompanied with some men stood holding the ring of the *Ka`bah*'s door invoking Allah and seeking His Aid against Abraha and his troops.

Ibn Ishaq said: then, `Abdul Muttalib let the door's ring and set out with his companions to the mountains seeking shelter and awaiting for what would happen next. In the morning, Abraha got prepared to enter Mecca, and got his elephant and troops prepared. The elephant's name was Mahmoud. When he was directed towards Mecca, Nufail Ibn Habib came near him and whispered in his ear: Kneel down Mahmoud and go back home safe, you are in Allah's Sacred Town. He let go his ear and the elephant kneeled down.

As-Suhaili said: this means that the elephant fell to the ground, as elephants do not kneel down. It is said: that some elephants might kneel down just as camels. And, Allah Knows Best.

Nufail Ibn Habib went away and climbed up the mount till he was far and safe. The Abyssinians beat the elephant forcing him to stand up to his feet, but he refused. They hit his head with axe-like weapons, but he refused. They tried their best to force him to stand up to his feet, but they could not. They directed his face back towards the Yemen and he stood up and ran thereto. They directed him towards the *Sham* (Syria) and then towards the east and he stood up to his feet and ran thereto. They again directed him towards Mecca, but he refused. Thereupon, Allah the Almighty sent upon them birds

from the seaside resembling hawks. Each bird held three stones: one in his beak and two in his two legs. The stones were like chick-peas and lentils, and none from among the Abyssinians was hit by a stone, but he was killed. Moreover, the birds did not hit them all. The rest of them fled away seeking the way they first came from and asking about Nufail Ibn Habib to guide them back to Yemen.

Ibn Ishaq said: the Abyssinians fled away while death pursuing them on every path and in every way and Abraha was hit with a stone as well. They carried him and his body began to tear up part after part till they reached San`aa. After a short while, his chest cracked (as claimed by historians) and he died.

Ibn Ishaq said: I have been told by Ya`qub Ibn `Utbah that that year was the first in which measles, small-box, and bitter trees such as colocynth and African rue appeared in the Arab Peninsula.

Ibn Ishaq said: When Allah the Almighty sent His Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him), He reminded the Quraishites with His Grace and Favor bestowed on them through defeating the Abyssinians and defying them saying: ***{Have you (O Muhammad (Peace be upon him)) not seen how your Lord dealt with the owners of the Elephant? [The Elephant army which came from Yemen under the command***

of Abraha Al-Ashram intending to destroy the Ka`bah at Makkah]. Did He not make their plot go astray? And He sent against them birds, (Ababil) in flocks. Striking them with stones of Sijjil (baked clay). And He made them like (an empty field of) stalks (of which the corn has been eaten up by cattle)}.

Then, Ibn Hisham and Ibn Ishaq started to interpret this *Surah* and the next stated as follows: Ibn Hisham said: The word "*Ababil*" means "in flocks", though the Arabs never used that word before the Revelation of the Glorious Qur'an. But as for the word "*Sijjil*", I was told by Yunus An-Nahwi and Abu `Ubaidah that it was used by the Arabs to mean: solid and strong. Moreover, some interpreters claimed that this word was originally two in Persian, but the Arabs rendered them a single word that is "*Sinj*" and "*Jil*". '*Sinj'* means stone and '*Jil'* stands for clay and hard stones consist of these two materials, stone and clay. He added, " `*Assf*" stands for leaves. Al-Kasa'i said: I have heard some grammarians saying: "The singular form of '*Ababil*' (flock) is '*Abil*'. Besides, many of our early scholars said: '*Ababil*' are flocks of birds gathering group after group from here and there.

Narrated `Abdullah Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with them): Their beaks were like those of

the birds and their legs were like those of the dogs. In addition, `Ikrimah transmitted: their heads were like those of the lions and they came from the seaside and their color was green. Also, `Ubaid Ibn `Umair said: they were marine black birds, holding stones in their beaks and legs. `Abdullah Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) said also: they looked like the Phoenix, and the smallest stone they carried was equal to the head of a human being and other stones were equal to camels. The same view was held by Yunus Ibn Bakir after Ibn Ishaq. Some interpreters said: The stones were too small. Allah knows best!

Ibn Abu Hatim said: Abu Zar`ah told us on the authority of Muhammad Ibn `Abdullah Ibn Abu Shaibah after Mu`awiyah after Al-A`mash after Abu Sufyȧn after `Ubaid Ibn `Umair saying: When Allah the Almighty wanted to destroy the owners of the elephant He sent against them birds in flocks from the seaside resembling hawks, each one of them carried three stones: one in his beak and two in his two legs. They flew over till they were directly above the army, then they screamed and let go of the stones. The stones used to cut off or crack whom they hit from his head to his toes. In addition, Allah the Almighty sent a severe wind that hit the stones and added to their speed and strength, the matter that caused the majority of the army to perish.

Ibn Ishaq said as stated earlier that not all of them were hit by the stones. Rather, some of them managed to return to the Yemen and related to their people what had happened to them and to the whole army. And Abraha himself was hit with the stones and was carried till he reached the Yemen where he died, may Allah the Almighty damn him!

Narrated Ibn Ishaq saying: I was told by `Abdullah Ibn Abu Bakr after Samurah after `A'ishah (May Allah be pleased with her) that she said: "I have seen the rider and stableman of the elephant at Mecca blind, crippled and asking the people to feed them up." However, it was mentioned earlier that the stableman was called Anis, but the rider was unidentified. Allah knows best!

In his *Tafsir* (interpretation), An-Naqqash mentioned that the flood carried away their dead bodies and threw them into the sea. At the same year of this great incident, Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) was born. Some scholars say that it took place two years prior to his (Peace be upon him) birth.

Then, Ibn Ishaq cited the poetry the Arabs composed pertaining to that great incident in which Allah the Almighty made victorious His Sacred House which He wanted to grant honor, dignity,

purification and respect through sending His Messenger Muhammad (Peace be upon him) and the Legislation He sends with him. One of the fundamental pillars of this Legislation is the Prayer whose *Qiblah* direction would be made to the honorable *Ka`bah*. That which Allah the Almighty did to the owners of the elephant was never for the sake of the Quraishites themselves. As the Christians who were represented in the Abyssinians were really nearer to the Ka`bah than the polytheists of Quraish, but the victory was granted to the Sacred House itself in preparation for the advent of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him).

Added Ibn Ishaq and others: After the death of Abraha, the Abyssinians were ruled by his son, Yaksum, then by his brother, Masruq Ibn Abraha who was their last king.

The incident of the elephant took place in Al-Muharram, 882 according to the Roman Calendar. Following the death of Abraha and his succeeding two sons, the Abyssinian rule over the Yemen came to an end, the church built by Abraha was deserted. No one could even approach it for it was built over the burial place of two idols – that of Ku`aib and his wife. The two idols were made of wood, their height was about sixty cubits and they were touched with the jinn. For this very reason, no one could take the

risk to come near the church or to take anything of its building or ornaments fearing the evils of the jinn. It stayed deserted till the time of the first Abbaside Caliph, As-Saffah whom the news of the riches found inside the church reached. He sent his ruler over the Yemen, Al-`Abbas Ibn Ar-Rabi` to destroy it and bring him all the precious objects he might find there.

Finally, one should raise his hands to Allah the Almighty and supplicate, saying: *"O Allah! All the Praises are for You; You are the Light of the Heavens and the Earth. And all the Praises are for You; You are the Keeper of the Heavens and the Earth. All the Praises are for You; You are the Lord of the Heavens and the Earth and whatever is therein. You are the Truth, and Your Promise is the Truth, and Your Speech is the Truth, and meeting You is the Truth, and Paradise is the Truth and Hell (Fire) is the Truth and all the prophets are the Truth and the Hour is the Truth. O Allah! I surrender to You, and believe in You, and depend upon You, and repent to You, and in Your cause I fight and with Your orders I rule. So please forgive my past and future sins and those sins which I did in secret or in public. It is You Whom I worship, None has the right to be worshipped except You."*

والحمد لله رب العالمين!

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